

HARCOURT.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTERIOUS WIFE, &c.

“ Dishonour waits on perfidy. The villain
“ Shou’d blush to think a falsehood : ’Tis the crime
“ Of cowards.”

JOHNSON.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL-STREET.
1799.

HARBOUR

THE AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF THE



HARCOURT.

CHAP. I.

EVERY wish our hero had ever ventured to breathe was now accomplished ; his pride dilated while he reflected he was a Douglas, and he anticipated the pleasure of moving in the brilliant circle of fashion, independent even of his uncle. Master of an immense fortune, Lady Juliana Valtravers might not now think herself disgraced by an union with the heir to the Duke of Durham : this was the first time the idea of her Ladyship

had presented itself since he left Evian.— Would she marry Lord Dunraven, he considered, after the decided marks of preference she had shewn him? and should he be inclined to make an offer of his hand, admitting she had, or meant to refuse that Nobleman, was a point he could not resolve. Like Marmontel's Alcibiades, he wished to be loved for himself. Madame de Valcerné had put this romantic notion into his head, and it may be supposed his opinion of his own merit was not decreased by the knowledge he had so lately acquired concerning his birth and expectations. His understanding, which was of a superior order, taught him not to value advantages from which he intrinsically derived no merit; yet how many people would now give him credit for every virtue in the catalogue of human perfection, who, had he remained George Harcourt, would, *vice versa*, have supposed him capable of every crime! The Mackenzies, for example, how different would their behaviour have been, had they been able



able to divine he had even the slightest chance of ever succeeding to a Dukedom!

He next reflected he was related to his first friend, Principal Douglas, and his heart expanded with gratitude towards that worthy man, who had given him an education so suitable to his birth and present prospects; while he equally rejoiced to find it was now in his power to provide in the most ample manner for the Principal, should he, as he much wished, make England his future residence.

He rose at his usual hour, and soon after eleven the Duke was announced, who paid Mr. Elton some flattering and just compliments upon the real benevolent service he had done his nephew, and was sorry to find he was so soon to leave the kingdom, as he now talked of doing in a few days, and said he should not request his nephew would become his inmate till he returned from Falmouth, during which interval he should

take the necessary measures to enable him to assume the name of Douglas, but hoped both gentlemen would dine with him *sans ceremonie*. This was readily agreed to, and after sitting near two hours, the Duke took his leave, infinitely pleased with the unaffected plainness of Mr. Elton's manners, and happy to find his nephew was really likely to reflect a lustre upon the honourable name of Douglas.

George employed the interval between his uncle's visit, and the time he thought necessary to devote to his toilet, in writing to the Principal, and to Albertine, pressing the former very much to leave the Democrats to disorganize France at their leisure, and assuring the latter she would soon be properly introduced into the *beau monde*, under the auspices, and as the ward of the Duke of Durham, in whose favour he begged leave to relinquish the title of her guardian, though he should ever continue to regard her in the light of a beloved sister. He read
both

both letters to Elton, who was gratified by these repeated marks of his confidence, and mentally offered up a prayer, that so excellent a heart and disposition might not be perverted by those follies more than tolerated among people of rank and fashion.

The Duke received them in his library, and pointed out the picture his nephew so strongly resembled, which was done for his mother before she went abroad; and then proceeded to tell George he had waited upon a lady who was in the habit of taking a few young people under her protection after they had finished their education, as there were many reasons which induced guardians particularly to look upon her house as an eligible asylum for their wards upon their entrance into life.—Her name was Shenstone. She was in every respect a woman of fashion, of unblemished character; the widow of a superior Officer, rather straitened in her circumstances, which induced her to have

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recourse

recourse to this agreeable and honourable method of increasing her income.

“Unluckily,” the Duke continued, “she cannot take our joint ward at present ; so I think Mademoiselle de Valcarné had better remain at Brighton a short time longer, than run the risk of being less agreeably situated ; and Mrs. Shenstone has promised to receive her the first week in February.”

George was perfectly of his uncle’s opinion, and thought Albertine could not object to so prudent an arrangement. The afternoon was dedicated to business, as the Duke wished Mr. Elton to be present when he delivered up his trust to his nephew ; and that gentleman took an opportunity to tell the Duke, he should, notwithstanding his late great accession of fortune, and future brilliant prospects, make his wife’s grandson his heir ; he had no nearer relations, and his being acknowledged by his mother’s family

family was no reason why he should not conceive the promise he had made his wife upon her death-bed sacred.

“ I won’t offer you so gross an affront, my good friend,” replied the Duke, “ as to compliment you upon doing what you suppose is right. Our joint heir will do us both honour ; you may be proud of your grandson, and, believe me, I already glory in my nephew.”

The Duke had as few foibles as fall to the share of most men ; but he had a sort of family pride, which led him to suppose the descendants of the house of Douglas were a superior order of beings. Except from himself, for he was modest to an excess in that particular, he concealed this weakness ; he conceived the name, or rather the blood, must ensure beauty and every female virtue to the one sex,—and figure, courage, and every manly quality and perfection to the other. George so far exceeded his most

sanguine expectations even of a Douglas, who must of course have inherited all the bravery and virtues of his noble ancestors, that from the second day of their intimacy, no one could have persuaded this, in most respects, excellent man, his idolized nephew was ever in the wrong. Those who had been *his* friends, he conceived entitled to the first place in his esteem; and notwithstanding his universal philanthropy, he avowed the utmost hatred for *his* enemies, and such he justly styled the Mackenzies. Mr. Elton participated too much in his sentiments to condemn them; they therefore separated mutually pleased with each other, and spent great part of their time together while Mr. Elton remained in London, who having regulated his affairs, and once more, to their regret, taken leave of his friends, set out early in the ensuing week, accompanied by his grandson, for Falmouth, who, after having seen the worthy man embark, hastened back to London, and, to the Duke of Durham's infinite satisfaction, took up his

his abode in St. James's Square ; when, every necessary form having been observed, he was presented to their Majesties, and to all his uncle's friends, as the Honourable Mr. Douglas, and future Duke of Durham ; which intimation, and the large fortune he was soon known to have in possession, procured him a numerous set of acquaintance, and a general invitation from most families of distinction in London.

Among the most intimate of his new friends, was the Marquis of Beuifort, eldest son to the Duke of Northington, and brother to the Lord John Villars whom Mackenzie had attended to Venice. As the two families were related by intermarriages, the young men were introduced to each other as *cousins*—a circumstance that placed them immediately upon the most familiar footing ; and under the auspices of this dissipated, extravagant young Nobleman, Douglas soon shone conspicuous among the most dashing young men of fashion of the

age. Pride still preserved him from falling into any of the excesses which many of his companions gloried in, and he was neither to be laughed nor ridiculed out of the excellent precepts Principal Douglas had early instilled into his mind ; yet a sort of arrogant consciousness that his actions were ever regulated by the strict rule of right, notwithstanding the vortex of dissipation he was involved in, rather tarnished his merit.

The Duke of Northington, who had been peculiarly unfortunate in his children, looked upon him as a prodigy ; while the Marquis of Beuifort had sense enough to admire, what he had not fortitude enough to imitate, and found, in spite of what he termed his rigid principles, Douglas became every day more and more the envy of his own sex, and the admiration of the other.

Thus flattered, courted, and praised, it may be supposed his pride was not likely to diminish, when it received a very severe,
though

though not very unexpected check from his uncle, who informed him one evening, when they happened to be *tête-à-tête*, that he had just received an express from Monteith Abbey, by which he learned that his fair ward, Lady Juliana Valtravers had disposed of her hand, on the day it was dispatched, to Lord Dunraven.

“A sort of family arrangement,” the Duke continued; “I wish it may prove a happy one; Lady Juliana might have looked higher. However, since it was her parent’s wish she should marry this young man, why it is all very well. I think you saw her Ladyship at Evian, George? She will be astonished when I introduce you to her as my nephew, and perhaps sorry she did not take more time to look about her.”

“I must disclaim your compliment as far as it concerns myself, Sir,” replied George, more piqued than he would have chosen to acknowledge; “had Lady Juliana felt the slightest degree of preference in my favour,

she would hardly have been in such haste to part with her liberty ; and for my own part, I should despise the finest woman in England, who would not as soon have accepted my hand under my former disadvantages as at this moment."

" Spoke like a Douglas !" exclaimed the Duke.

George hastily changed the subject to one more consonant to his feelings, and less mortifying to his vanity.

CHAP II.

HITHERTO every thing had concurred to raise Douglas in his own esteem; but this was such a convincing proof of the fallacy of his expectations, to be loved for himself, that he was almost tempted to forswear any future connexion with so fickle a sex. Lady Dunraven was an ambitious coquette, very unworthy the regret of any sensible man, and he was pleased with the notion that she would now suppose he might, had he felt himself so inclined, have aspired to her hand even at Evian: therefore she must place his former reserve to the indifference with which he beheld her charms. Such an idea gratified
his

his prevalent failing, and he almost longed to be introduced to this haughty beauty, merely to see how she would behave. It is truly observed in one of our Poets—

“ In adversity the mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest ;

“ But in prosperity dissolving, sinks to ease, and loses all its firmness !”

So fared it with Douglas ; his heart was still the residence of truth and honour, and the most noble generous sentiments glowed in his bosom : but two months' familiar intercourse with a set of the most fashionable dissipated young men in town, insensibly led him to join in their follies. The pride of conscious rectitude vanished before the delusive voice of pleasure ; he became a member of the superior gaming clubs, and his convivial joys were sometimes pushed to all the extravagancy of frantic Bacchanalian rites :—such was the influence of bad example.

The

The Duke of Durham was unfortunately persuaded his excellent principles would preserve his morals; and his turning night into day, losing or winning thousands at hazard, talking of keeping running horses, with various other extravagances, were merely follies natural at his age, and only rendered his virtues more conspicuous. This he told the Duke of Northington, when he hinted to him that his nephew seemed to have broken through the excellent resolutions he had formed upon his setting out in life, and was not sorry to observe he bade fair even to outvie *his* sons in the annals of extravagance.

Albertine still remained at Brighton, as Mrs. Shenstone was yet unable to accommodate her, though it was now the latter end of February. However, as she hoped to be able to receive her during the ensuing month, that young lady was obliged, very much against her will, to remain with the Benson family. She continued regularly to correspond

spond with her guardian ; and when he found time, he answered half a dozen of her letters at once. To Mr. Elton he wrote every week ; and that gentleman, in the mildest manner, endeavoured to point out the errors of the fashionable conduct he had adopted. Douglas's own excellent understanding made him truly sensible of that good man's kind intentions ; but dissipation was become habitual, and he continued to dazzle the fashionable world by the splendour of his equipages, liveries, and other *et ceteras*, and to afford paragraphs for the different newspapers, while his natural good sense taught him to condemn the life he led.

One fine morning early in March, as he was dashing along Piccadilly, mounted in his curicle, and followed by two grooms, his progress was impeded by a broad-wheeled waggon, which was crawling along by the side of one of the stands of coaches, in too narrow a part of the street for him to pass it with safety. While he was following this heavy machine,

machine, a gentleman on horseback rode up to the side of his carriage, and looked him full in the face, exclaiming—

“Zounds! sure my eyes don’t deceive me! You whisked by me so quick while I was mounting, I could not see your face? Don’t you remember me, George?”

“Charles Creighton, by all that’s wonderful!” cried Douglas, glancing his eyes over a smart buck, very well mounted, and attended by a groom in a rich livery; “who would have expected to have seen you in London? I thought you were broiling under the torrid zone, smoking segars, and eating pillaw. But how have you done since we parted?”

“Risen in the world as you seem to have done, George?” extending his ungloved hand, which his friend cordially shook.

“Suppose you alight, and get into the curricie, Charles; I will drive you wherever you chuse; for whether I go North, South, East, or West, is a matter of absolute indifference

difference to me, and I shall be very glad of your company."

"With all my soul," was the reply, alighting at the same moment; "I was only going to display my graces in Rotten-Row."

"Then you will have no objection to accompany me to Hammersmith. I owe the Duke of Northington, who is confined at his villa with a cold, a how do you, and was on my road thither."

"Your equipage and suite induce me to credit your words, George, else I should think you were *quizzing* me. Dame Fortune has been very bountiful to me of late, but you seem to have been a still more favoured mortal; for who, in the name of Heaven, would have thought two such poor devils as we were when we parted, would have met again two bucks of the first class. Do, for pity's sake, explain how you came to be so greata man."

"Why,

"Why, then, in three words, I have within the last three months taken the name of Douglas, by my grandfather's (the late Duke of Durham) express orders, and in obedience to his will."

"Say no more, my dear fellow; I am *au fait* of every thing, and wish you joy from the bottom of my soul. I have heard of no one but yourself since my arrival in London; but little thought the elegant Douglas — dashing Douglas — fashionable Douglas — was your sweet self! You have still greater honours in expectation, I understand; I no longer wonder you were such a favourite with the old Principal."

"You do my excellent friend a real injustice, Charles; humanity alone induced him to befriend the hapless orphan I then was."

"Only satisfy my curiosity respecting yourself," rejoined Creighton, "and you shall have all my adventures since we parted."

"Recollect

"Recollect it must be considered as a secret," said Douglas, "as it is not necessary the fashionable world should know the Duke of Durham's grandson owed his education to the charity of a stranger."

"It would be too mortifying to our modern bucks to find themselves (as I find they are) so totally eclipsed by this late unfriended orphan. However, you know, George, you may depend upon my discretion, though I am afraid my unexpected good fortune has rather unsettled my flighty brain; for you must know, soon after my arrival in India, I was informed my godfather, whom to my recollection I never saw, had taken it into his head to die, and leave me thirty thousand pounds, which I thought a very pretty beginning for my future Nabobship. But soon after this unexpected event, it pleased God to take a liking to my brother; and for fear my valour should induce me to expose my life, now become of consequence to my family, I was recalled to make way for a less fortunate cadet,

cadet, who was not, like myself, next heir to a Baronet, and I hastened immediately home. On my landing once more in Britain on my native Highlands, I found my father no more, and my mother inconsolable for her double loss. My arrival proved a real source of consolation to her, though we were positively almost strangers to each other, as I had never seen her since I left home at nine years old, in search of knowledge; and you know how well I had succeeded in that pursuit. However, to make short of my story, having in vain endeavoured to prevail upon the worthy Dowager to accompany me to town, I sat out *solus* to take possession of a very handsome town house that overlooks the Green Park, at the door of which I was mounting as your equipage caught my attention; and I was forced unwillingly to acknowledge there were more elegant bucks than myself, little expecting to recognize your features in the object of my envy. But I trust you will take me under your tuition, just to instruct me in the noble art of

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spending

spending a thousand pounds a month with eclat."

"Oh faith! the easiest thing in nature; but don't let me advise you to be misled by my example. I formed some excellent resolutions, and, to my shame be it spoken, have kept none; yet, upon my soul, I am often ashamed when I reflect how unprofitably my time is spent, and how much money I squander away—I could really spend it infinitely more to my satisfaction. So much for fashionable folly, Charles; you find I can moralize upon my own faults. Whether I shall ever seriously set about a reform in my conduct, I can't pretend to say; but believe me I don't glory in my errors, and I shall be proud of introducing you to the Duke of Durham, from whom you can learn nothing but good, and whom I hope, when cured of my present delirium, I shall endeavour to resemble."

Sir Charles laughed, and said, at all events he seemed determined to make no
more

more rash resolutions. He then enquired after the Mackenzies; and George proceeded to inform him how he had, and how he meant to behave to that worthy family. Sir Charles was so deeply interested in his narrative, that Douglas sent one of his servants with his compliments of enquiry to the Duke of Northington instead of paying his intended visit, and turned his horses' heads towards London.

The Baronet declared himself anxious to see his friend's fair ward; and if she inherited any of her mother's beauty or excellent qualities, he should certainly become a candidate for her favour. Douglas encouraged the notion, as he particularly wished to see his lamented friend's daughter well married; but told Sir Charles he must judge for himself, and promised to introduce him to Albertine as soon as she arrived in town.

Douglas alighted at the Baronet's, whose house, though small when compared to the
one

one he inhabited, was very commodious, and very elegantly fitted up. But for prior engagements, they would have spent the day together ; as it was, the Baronet agreed to dine at Durham House the following day, and they mutually determined to spend great part of their time in each other's company.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

DOUGLAS dined by appointment at the Star and Garter with the Marquis of Beuifort, Colonel Frazer, only son to Lord Everly, to whom he had been lately introduced, and the Earl of Valmont, with whom he had renewed the acquaintance commenced at Evian, and who, in common with his other new friends, presumed Elton was his paternal, and the late Duke of Durham his maternal grandfather; which in his and their opinion perfectly accounted for his recent change of name, and the late Duke's estrangement from his daughter, as they knew his pride could ill brook an

alliance with a merchant. A dozen more young men of equal rank, but inferior parts, completed the set, and the evening, or rather night, was devoted to dice and Champaign. It may therefore be supposed Douglas did not see the Duke till late the next day, who for the first time ventured to hint he was afraid the present fashionable hours did not agree with him, as he looked unusually pale, and seemed languid for want of proper rest. George, with the frankness inherent to his nature, acknowledged the truth of his Grace's remarks, and protested he could alledge nothing in defence of what common sense condemned, though authorized by the votaries of fashion, or more properly, of folly.

“Come, come, such an ingenuous confession deserves applause,” replied the Duke; “only take care of your health for my sake and the worthy Elton’s. You are at an age to enjoy pleasure; I only wish your friends would allow you to dedicate a little more
time

time to repose. But have you an engagement for this evening? for my late married ward is arrived in town, Lady Dunraven. I met Lord Monteith yesterday upon business, and of course paid my congratulatory compliments to the bride, and requested leave to introduce my nephew; she receives company this evening, and assured me she should be happy to see Mr. Douglas. I entered into no details concerning you; merely in answer to the Earl and Lady Monteith's numerous questions, told them your mother had forfeited my brother's favour by marrying into a merchant's family, notwithstanding the respectability of every branch, and that your paternal grandmother was a Douglas; that fortunately the Duke's mistaken prejudices had ultimately proved of real advantage to you, as you had received an excellent education, and had reaped much more benefit from travelling with your grandfather, than you would have done under the care or tuition of any mercenary Governor. These hints I thought

would account for your having bore the name of Elton at Evian, and render them less inquisitive when they recognize their old acquaintance in Mr. Douglas."

"True, Sir," replied George, "and I shall be happy to accompany you to the bride's at your own hour, notwithstanding one of my oldest friends is coming to dine here;" mentioning where his intimacy with Creighton commenced, and how unexpectedly they had met again.

The Duke assured him he should be very happy to see the Baronet, and was very glad they had renewed their friendship so opportunely. They were debating upon the strange accidents which had hitherto chequered George's eventful life, when the groom of the chambers brought the Duke a note, informing him, as he presented it, that a servant waited for an answer. George was rising to retire, meaning to take a ride for an hour, when the Duke stopped him, saying—

"'Tis

“ 'Tis from Mrs. Shenstone, who means, if we have no objection, to set out for Brighton to-morrow, and to bring Mademoiselle de Valcarné back with her, and requests proper credentials for the purpose.”

“ Oh, I will write to Albertine and her kind hosts ; and a few words of thanks from your Grace for the care they have taken of *your* ward, would be very acceptable I can suppose, and almost deemed an equivalent for the trouble they have taken.”

“ I will set about the task immediately, my dear fellow, while you write to the young lady ; and must request you will pay her a few gallant compliments in my name, and assure her I have long been impatient to enter upon my charge.”

They adjourned into the library for the purpose, and had scarcely finished when Sir Charles Creighton was announced, who protested, after the ceremony of his introduction was over, he should never be able to observe etiquette with his friend George,

else he knew he had made his appearance much too soon for a dinner visiter at the Duke of Durham's; but his Grace must place his deficiency in point of ceremony wholly to his regard for his nephew, with whom he had a thousand things to talk over.

Such acknowledged friendship for his beloved Douglas ensured the Baronet the Duke's esteem. They spent a most agreeable day, as orders had been given not to admit any company, that they might not be interrupted; and Sir Charles rose very high in the Duke's good graces before they parted, and readily promised to dine or sup whenever it suited him, *sans ceremonie*, at Durham house, whether Douglas was at home to receive him or not.

As soon as he was gone, the Duke and his nephew set out for the Earl of Monteith's, with whom the new-married couple resided. As they had made it late, there was a great crowd

crowd of fashionable folks assembled to pay their compliments, *d'usage* upon such occasions. When they entered, Douglas was rather at a loss to define his feelings with respect to the bride as he walked up the rooms, but very curious to see the bridegroom. He was first introduced to Lord and Lady Monteith, who with some confusion recognized the merchant's grandson they had chosen to overlook at Evian; they made a few awkward attempts at apologies and congratulations upon his change of name, and felt relieved when he made his retreating bow, and followed his uncle through the crowd of admirers who surrounded the beautiful bride. She was in excellent spirits, receiving the homage she thought so much her due, and dealing out her fascinating smiles to all around, when she beheld the man she had long wished in vain to obliterate from her memory.

The momentary glow of pleasure the unexpected meeting with a beloved object

is sure to occasion, soon receded before the painful reflection that she had bestowed her hand upon one man, while her heart was in the possession of another. The first idea had tinged her lovely cheeks with additional bloom; but the second had as instantly robbed them of even their former colour, which the discovery that the much-admired, much-beloved, and much-regretted Elton was nephew to her guardian, and heir to the first Dukedom in the three kingdoms, was not likely to restore.

The Duke, nay every one noticed her agitation, while Douglas paid her his compliments with the same indifference he would have addressed a total stranger, seemed wholly unconscious of the perturbation every other person near her Ladyship attributed to his appearance, and turned to the happy bridegroom, who was advancing towards the Duke, with an air of unconcern peculiarly mortifying to Lady Dunraven, who determined to summon pride to her assistance,

assistance, and convince this frigid mortal her memory was as short as his seemed to be. But how different were their sensations ! Douglas acted a natural—her Ladyship a studied part, and her forced gaiety was not proof against his unfeigned indifference ; for the more she convinced him he had not been mistaken in the nature of her sentiments at Evian, the more he despised her for permitting Lord Dunraven to address her.

The Viscount was nearly of his own age, but a dwarf in comparison of size and figure ; and his countenance, at once devoid of expression, interest, or beauty, was the exact index to his mind : he was indolently good-natured, and was distinguished by an invariable smile or simper. To obtain Lady Juliana Valtravers's hand, he would have performed impossibilities, as avarice was not only his reigning, but his sole passion ; and every one knows what lengths misers will go to gratify their love of money, there-

fore during his courtship he was a perfect
cameleon, subservient in every instance to
her Ladyship's capricious humour. A thirst
for power induced her to accept his hand,
while she seriously regretted Elton was a
Citizen, and still more that she made so
little impression upon his heart; but con-
cluding they should never meet again, she
consented, with a tolerable grace, to fulfil
the dying request of her mother, and accom-
pany to the altar a man she despised, who
soon explained that her hand and fortune
were all he coveted, as from the moment he
became her husband, the most mortifying
neglect succeeded his late sedulous endea-
vours to please, and left her full leisure to
repent her hasty decision in his favour.

Curiosity induced her to ask some of her
surrounding beaux, before the Duke made
his appearance, what sort of a being his
half citizen nephew was, and was assured by
many gentlemen he was the magnet of the
fashionable world; the most elegant, most
expensive,

expensive, and most amiable man of his age and rank in England. Even those that attempted to criticize him, displayed their envy of his superior accomplishments in their wishes to lower him in the general esteem.

Thus prepared to expect a superior being, it may be supposed her Ladyship was not disappointed when she found this much-admired Douglas was the handsome Elton who had so seriously injured her peace of mind. The compliments of the surrounding group became first insipid, then tiresome in the extreme; their congratulations were almost insults, considering the situation of her heart; and Douglas, the only man she had every seriously wished to captivate, sedulously avoided giving her any opportunity to remind him of their former intimacy.

Lord Valmont, who made his appearance soon after the Duke of Durham, approached her with the Marquis of Beuifort, and

each endeavoured to outvie the other in their congratulations and compliments; but there was a degree of sarcastic irony legible upon the countenance of the former, truly provoking in her opinion, particularly when he enquired whether she did not think Mr. Douglas was strangely improved since she had last seen him

“ I have not made the remark,” she replied:

“ Your Ladyship certainly has not attended to him then,” rejoined the Earl; “ consider, he

“ Can now vaunt a lineage of the greatest; and recount,

“ Among his fathers, names of ancient story, heroes, and godlike patriots.”

“ And does that improve the person or the understanding, Lord Valmont?” enquired her Ladyship, endeavouring to conceal how severely she felt the application, under a feigned laugh.

“ Both,

“ Both, in many people’s opinion; but here comes our friend. I dare say he is of my way of thinking; suppose your Ladyship puts the question to him?”

Before she could reply, George was close to them, and she eagerly exclaimed—

“ We were talking about Evian, Mr. Douglas.”

“ Her Ladyship don’t wish to make you vain, Douglas, else she would have informed you that you were the subject of our discourse, and my panegyric.”

“ Upon my word your Lordship is very obliging,” was the reply; “ but I should have thought you might have found many subjects more likely to amuse Lady Dunraven.”

“ Don’t attend to his nonsense I request, Mr. Douglas, and do tell me how the good Mr. Elton does.”

“ He was in very tolerable health when I last heard from him, my Lady; he is now at Lisbon.”

“ Indeed!

“ Indeed ! Would you believe it, I was so dull of comprehension, that I had not the slightest idea, notwithstanding what the Duke of Durham said yesterday, I had ever seen you before.”

“ As no doubt your Ladyship had long since forgotten such a person as myself existed, I can suppose you felt very little interested in the Duke’s partial account of his nephew.”

Her Ladyship was excessively pleased that the entrance of more company afforded her an excuse to turn from Douglas, who retreated with his two friends, each anxious to rally him upon the bride’s behaviour.— He listened with tolerable patience for some time to their joint prognostics, then seriously asked Lord Valmont whether he had ever had any reason to suppose him in love with Lady Juliana Valtravers ?

“ I know she in vain endeavoured to warm your flinty heart, insensible being ! but she

was

was very willing to become the heroine of a romance in favour of Mr. Elton, and I am certain she does not behold Mr. Douglas with the eyes of indifference."

"She is a coquette, I believe; but pray judge her with less severity, Valmont, and imagine it possible she may talk to me about Evian, and yet be very much in love with Lord Dunraven."

"I maintain your conclusion to be impossible, Douglas," cried the Marquis; "she may or may not like you, but it is not in the nature of any woman to love that narrow-minded, selfish, miserly, stupid looking little being she calls husband; and if she draws comparisons between you, it would be paying you a poor compliment to say they must terminate in your favour. Therefore if she seems inclined to play the fool, why practise Lord Chesterfield's precepts."

"Never while I breathe, Marquis. I respect my own peace of mind rather too much, and must say, I think custom, fashion,

or

or example, very poor excuses for any serious breaches of moral rectitude."

"Take care you don't fail when put to the trial, Douglas," said the Marquis.

At that moment the Duke of Durham approached the trio, and proposed returning home to his nephew, who assured him he was at his service. They made their bows and their exit, and Douglas gladly retired soon after supper, to court that repose he really began to want.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

ON the second morning after the above-mentioned visit, just as Sir Charles and Douglas were setting off for Liquorpond-street, to give some orders respecting a coach the former had building, a packet was brought to the latter, which he knew from the direction came from the Principal, and of course stopped to peruse the contents. It contained many bills upon England for various sums, which he requested his young friend would place the product of in the funds, hinting how much he was at a loss who to trust with several things of his own
and

and other people's he was desirous to send to England.

George, who had long been anxious for an opportunity to convince this most excellent man of his unbounded gratitude for past favours, and the kind friendship he had manifested for him when totally forsaken by his unprincipled guardian, instantly determined to set out for Paris, in hopes it might be in his power to serve him much more essentially there than in London, and immediately mentioned this sudden resolution to the Duke and Baronet.

As the first fury of the Revolutionists had subsided, and the British Court had an Ambassador at Paris, the Duke did not oppose his intention, though he requested he would make a very short stay upon the Continent, as he should really be very uneasy during his absence."

" As

“As your Grace must have formed a very high idea of my prudence,” said Sir Charles, “I am sure it would afford you infinite satisfaction to know your nephew had so staid a companion; therefore, Douglas, if you have no objection, I will be of your party. I long to see the Principal, Paris, the Sans Culottes, &c. &c. and particularly to look down upon a few of our old insolent school-fellows, though I suppose they are all dispersed over the face of the earth.”

George assured his friend he could not have made him a more agreeable proposal; they therefore set out to prepare for their intended expedition, promising to return and dine with the Duke, who rather hoped this Parisian journey would break into some of his nephew's numerous engagements, which succeeded one another so rapidly, that he very seldom spent an evening, nay hardly a night at home, as the sun frequently rose before he retired to rest.

They

They were settling when they should set out, and how they should travel, over the bottle after dinner, when the Duke received a note from Mrs. Shenstone, to announce her return, and the arrival of Mademoiselle de Valcarné in Hertford-street, who sent her particular compliments to Mr. Douglas, and hoped to see him as soon as he could make it convenient. His Grace delivered her message, and then said—

“As I am really impatient to see this young lady, suppose, George, we send word by the servant that we will drink our tea at Mrs. Shenstone’s.”

“With all my heart, Sir, for I am anxious to hear your’s and Creighton’s opinion of my ward; besides, I wish to welcome her to London: her misfortunes entitle her to every mark of respect, and I shall ever consider her in the light of a beloved sister.”

“I make no doubt but she is truly deserving your regard, George. I am prepared
both

both to admire and esteem the daughter of Madame de Valcarné before I see her."

"And I expect to lose my heart at the first glance," cried the Baronet. "How old is she, George?"

"Just turned of sixteen."

"Oh, then she was quite a child when you were in Martinico?"

"Exactly so; and I am sorry to say, though a mere youth myself at that period, I was ten times more prudent than I am now. Expectation of the future taught me to enjoy the present in moderation, and to endeavour to deserve the blessings of Providence.—Prosperity has unhinged my mind, set my brain upon the whirl, and led me into a thousand follies. What an humiliating confession! Don't you despise me, Uncle?"

"I am far more tempted to admire you, George."

"Oh Heavens! Duke, do you wish to make me persevere in my absurdities?"

"While you act up to your present principles, there is little to dread from a life of
dissipation,

dissipation ; and your own good sense will soon teach you to abjure all excesses destructive to your constitution, and all amusements ruinous to your fortune."

" I hope you will prove a true prophet, Uncle ; but remember I make no promises."

" Then let us set out for Hertford-street ; as Mrs. Shenstone may not keep such *very* fashionable hours as the generality of your acquaintance."

They had been informed the Duke's carriage was at the door, therefore set out to pay their visit. They were shewn into a very elegant saloon, where they were almost immediately joined by Mrs. Shenstone and Albertine, who, unmindful of the Duke and Baronet, hastened towards Douglas, and almost flung herself into his arms, exclaiming—

" How happy I am to see you, my dear Guardian ! I never was so tired of any place
in

in my life as that odious Brighton ; how glad I was when Mrs. Shenstone arrived !”

Douglas was not prepared for so very cordial a reception ; it seemed to imply a degree of mutual familiarity which had never subsisted between them, and must lower his ward in his uncle’s and friend’s opinion.—Mrs. Shenstone’s looks expressed her disapprobation, as she thought such freedom only excusable in a daughter or a sister. The Baronet was of the same way of thinking ; yet he admired her person. She was in her sixteenth year, neither tall nor short, but what the French call *bien faite*, and had rather a pretty than a handsome countenance, which was nevertheless at times very fascinating, and she seldom appeared to more advantage than while expressing her unfeigned joy at seeing her guardian ;—but her ill timed exclamations of rapture, free behaviour, and high spirits, considering her recent irreparable loss, which before they met he was afraid his appearance would
forcibly

forcibly recal to her recollection, were very ill calculated to conciliate Douglas's esteem. That she should regard him in any other light than as her mother's husband, he hoped was impossible, as it would argue a want of delicacy few men were less likely to forgive; yet her sparkling eyes told a tale he was very unwilling to believe. His welcome was, in consequence, rather cool and very reserved; and he immediately introduced her to the Duke, whom he intimated she would in future consider as her guardian, as his Grace had been kind enough, at his request, to offer to take her under his protection.

Albertine endeavoured to appear pleased with an arrangement that by no means met her approbation, and the Duke's polite compliments rather dispelled the gloom which the proud reserve of Douglas had diffused over her smiling countenance. She was next introduced to Sir Charles, and in a short time the party were seated. Tea was immediately brought in, and Mrs. Shenstone endeavoured

endeavoured to make the conversation take a general turn; but Albertine took upon herself to amuse Douglas, next to whom she had seated herself, with an account of their journey, how she had passed her time at Brighton, &c. &c. and now and then extorted a few monosyllables from him in reply. A ring he wore in memory of her mother, attracted her notice while he was taking a dish of tea from the servant, and she seized the first opportunity of his resting that hand upon the arm of his chair, while answering a question of the Baronet, to draw it off his finger, exclaiming—

“My mother’s hair, I protest! I presume this is an English fashion, guardian? I have got a lock I will have set in the same manner, except you will give me this; for I declare I never saw a ring so much to my fancy.”

“It is not fit for a lady, Madam; besides, the jewels which surround it were presents of the person in whose memory I always mean to wear it, though believe me I do not want

such a memento to remind me of the most amiable woman in the world !”

This hint rather damped the young lady's vivacity ; she returned the ring with a gentle sigh, which the company might construe into regret for her mother. Sir Charles was not so inclined, nay, was even uncharitable enough to think the young lady would, notwithstanding her request, rather receive a wedding than a mourning ring from his friend ; yet he thought it strange she should be in love with a man who was so near becoming her father-in-law ;—besides, she must have been too young even to have known the meaning of the word during his residence in Martinico ; and surely when they met again at Brighton, her mother's danger alone ought to have occupied her mind : and had Madame de Valcarné been aware of her sentiments, she might upon her death-bed have entreated Douglas to transfer the affection he bore her to her daughter, but no doubt neither mother nor guardian were acquainted

6

with

with the situation of her heart.—The Duke's reflections were nearly similar, though he made greater allowance for the difference between French and English manners, and was more inclined to pity than condemn Albertine, from the moment he perceived Douglas retreated with no small degree of *hauteur* from her marked advances, as nothing was farther from his wish than to see him united to his ward: therefore the moment tea was over, he rose to take his leave, having consulted his nephew's looks, which assured him such a step would meet his approbation. Albertine chose to accompany them to the top of the stairs, to request Douglas would often visit Hertford-street, although he had resigned the care of her to the Duke, whom she was obliged to include in her invitation.

The moment they drove from the door, Douglas asked his uncle and friend their opinion of his ward.

"She is what you taught me to expect," replied the Duke, "very handsome, and possibly very accomplished; but I have seen too little of her to venture to form any decided opinion. What say you, Sir Charles?"

"That I have, contrary to my expectations, returned heart-whole, your Grace; for I never was fool enough to suppose I could rival Douglas in any lady's favour, particularly in one who has had so many opportunities of appreciating his merit."

"Do find some better reason for your indifference, Charles, and don't judge the daughter of my much-lamented friend too severely; it is by no means fair to form your opinion of foreign coin by the English standard. The French ladies, from custom, allow themselves liberties with our sex, which English ladies would hardly permit themselves to use with their husbands."

"And do you approve of French manners, George?" enquired the Duke.

"Not absolutely, Sir; though positively what are considered as mere innocent freedoms

freedoms in France, are looked upon in a very different light in England. I have known Albertine de Valcerné for some years, and I am persuaded she considers me more in the light of a brother than a lover; indeed my engagement with her mother, which she knows how anxious I was to ratify even at Brighton, renders it impossible she can regard me but as a friend."

"You should say, renders it impossible I can regard her but as a friend," said the Baronet. "Don't be in such haste to answer for the young lady; I did not say, nor think you were in love, but surely I don't judge her very severely because I fancy (it may be no more) she prefers you to any gentleman she has yet seen."

"Depend upon it, it is merely fancy, Charles; remember I am her only friend in a foreign country, as this with respect to her may be truly called, and was it not very natural she should be rejoiced to see me? Had I met the most indifferent acquaintance I ever had, even Margaret Mackenzie, at Smyrna, I

should have been tempted to catch her in my arms, and embrace her."

"There is great truth in your reasoning," rejoined the Duke; "French and English manners differ very much; I hope, for the amiable girl's sake, you are in the right. She was principally educated, you told me, by her excellent mother, who I am certain was an honour to her country, rank, and sex; therefore she must possess very strong principles, and will, no doubt, should she have unguardedly disposed of her heart in your favour, reflect in time she cannot with any degree of delicacy aspire to your hand."

Their arrival at Durham House put a stop to the conversation; and Sir Charles, having an engagement for the evening, took his leave, promising to call the next morning to talk over their intended journey.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THE Baronet was punctual to his appointment, and hardly allowed himself time to pay his compliments before he asked Douglas to accompany him to Finchley, where he was going to see an old relation of his mother's, a Counsellor by profession.

“He has been talking of dying these twenty years,” he continued, “therefore I don't put much faith in the note he sent me this morning express, requesting to see me before he expired. He is often seized with these gloomy fits, or, as some censorious people would say, qualms of conscience;

God forbid *I* should be so wicked, though he is a lawyer, and I have ever had an aversion to the whole fraternity. But I won't stop a quarter of an hour, and it will be only a pleasant drive in your curricule."

"I will accompany you with all my heart," replied Douglas; "but surely, unacquainted as I am with your relation, you have not chosen a very proper time to introduce me."

"Nonsense! I will lay you any sum from five guineas to as many hundred, we find him quite recovered. He sent for me in just the same hurry last week, and when I arrived, behold he was busy in his garden, and there we shall find him now."

Douglas made no farther objections; therefore between one and two they set out upon this expedition, and drove briskly along till they reached the steepest part of Highgate Hill, where George pulled up to let his horses take breath. They proceeded a foot pace till they had nearly arrived at a sharp turning towards the summit, and
were

were going to pass a heavy stage-coach before them, when the driver, looking round, said—

“ Take care, Gentlemen, here is something coming down the hill ; you will get jammed.”

Douglas had scarcely time to resume his former station in the rear before he heard the coachman call out, “ Take care, and be d—d to you,” to two post-boys who were displaying their dexterity in turning this, in many respects, dangerous corner. The words were scarcely out of his mouth, before the hind wheels of a post-coach caught that of the stage, and forced it several yards back, owing to the descent, and the velocity with which it advanced.

Douglas had some difficulty to back his horses in time to avoid the impending danger, and a most violent crash and general scream from both carriages ensued. Sir

Charles jumped out first, and ran to the post-coach to offer his services, as that had sustained much the greatest damage from the shock, the wheel having been entirely torn off by the superior strength of the stage.— Still, as the postillions had stopped their horses, the Baronet conceived the danger to be over, though the screams were as violent as ever. He perceived only females, one of whom he instantly assisted to alight, who kept crying out—“ My child! Oh my child! for God’s sake take care of my child!”

Douglas, who was close to his friend, was but just in time to catch a beautiful girl in his arms, who was going to take a spring, and could not recover herself; and as he was by no means deficient in point of strength, he effectually prevented her from receiving any injury through her speed, and bore her a few paces distance towards the elderly lady, who continued her former exclamations. The moment she was upon the ground, she burst out laughing; and upon

George’s

George's looking behind him to where her eyes were directed, perceived a third lady who had fallen out of the carriage in her fright, scrambling among the dirt to recover her legs; and two more, whose manners and appearance proclaimed them attendants to the others, continuing to rend the air with their screams, though the postillions had got them out of the coach, and they were out of even imaginary danger.

The first-mentioned lady caught hold of her child, as she called the young one, saying—

“ The Lord be praised ! What can you find to laugh at, my dear ? Only think what a dreadful accident we have escaped ! ”

“ Is not that alone enough to make one rejoice, grandmama ? But your crying out before you were hurt—Mrs. Macpherson chusing to alight on all fours—not to mention the absurdity of Warner and Margaret, would make graver people than me laugh ;

besides, you see the poor coach is the only sufferer, and that can easily be repaired.— Allow me to thank you, gentlemen, for your timely assistance,” curtsying very gracefully to the two friends, who had both been very much diverted by her remarks, and had some difficulty not to join in her mirth.

The elderly lady hardly fancying herself safe while in sight of the carriages, was for hurrying her grand-daughter down the hill; but, at his request, suffered Douglas to lead them towards the foot-path, where he assured her she was in no danger, and might wait without running any risk till her carriage was sufficiently put to rights to allow her to proceed. As the stage-coach passengers had also alighted, there were plenty of people occupied about the carriages, and the two friends had time to contemplate the features of the ladies with whom they had thus accidentally become acquainted.— The one to whom the carriage belonged, was between fifty and sixty, and looked the
woman

woman of fashion, though she was very plainly dressed. Her grand-daughter was just turned of fifteen, -and, in the most extensive sense of the word, a regular beauty ; there was a graceful, infantine playfulness in her manners irresistibly fascinating, and an arch expression of drollery upon her handsome countenance, added to the brilliancy of her sparkling blue eyes, gave infinite charms to a most lovely mouth. The third lady, who had now joined their party, was governess to the young one, and almost as fond of her as her grandmother.

Their male attendants, two staid elderly footmen, having chose to lead their horses down the hill for greater safety, did not come up till the carriages were nearly liberated.—The elderly lady reprimanded them for remaining at such a distance ; but the young one commended their prudence, and told her grandmother she must know by experience how wrong it was to hurry down steep hills.

“ I don’t

"I don't think the greatest misfortune could make you serious for more than ten minutes, Bell," cried the old lady.

"But at present you know, grandmama, we ought to sing *Te Deum*, instead of lamenting. Besides, I would not but have met with this adventure for the world; only think what entertaining epistles it will enable me to send to my Scotch friends! Here have we been a week crawling from Kinross, and not a single incident, save our present misfortune, has occurred to afford me a subject for a letter—now I shall be able to exercise my descriptive talents.—"Dashing down Highgate Hill, our carriage lost a wheel by coming in contact with an unwieldy machine cycled a stage-coach, and there is no knowing what might have been the dreadful consequence of this tremendous adventure, if two courteous knight-errants had not descended from their triumphal car, and flown to our assistance."

"Bell, Bell," interrupted the old lady, "you are certainly wild."

"Un-

"Undoubtedly, Madam, to think we have escaped unhurt. Only conceive how much more tragical my story would have been, had our coach been thrown sideways upon this deep descent, in which case it might have rolled over and over all the way down to the bottom, and I question much whether I should have been inclined to laugh when it stopped."

"The bare surmise terrifies me to death, Lady Isabella!" cried the Governess.

"Then I hardly know what effects the
1/ would have had upon you, Madam."

At this moment one of the servants came to inform his mistress it would be very dangerous to proceed in their carriage.

"Heavens! what shall we do?" exclaimed the elderly lady.

"If you will do me the honour to step into my curricule, ladies," said Douglas, "I will engage to convey two of you to any
part

part of London very safe, and my friend will——”

“ You are very obliging, Sir,” interrupted the old lady, “but I positively would almost as soon venture to get into my own coach, as into your equipage; besides, we have given you quite trouble enough already. John,” calling to one of her footman, “run and get two post-chaises.”

One of the by-standers said, there was no such a thing to be got in Highgate.

“Then, notwithstanding your dislike to open carriages, Ma’am,” said Douglas, “necessity may stand my friend.”

“Oh there are plenty of stages to be had, if the ladies can put up with those,” cried the man who had told them there were no post-chaises.

“You can only pity my folly, gentlemen, which induces me to make even so disagreeable a shift, in preference to accepting your considerate offer. See about one of those conveyances immediately, John.”

“Your

“ Your fears, grandmama, have deprived me of an excellent postscript to my letter. What a glorious conclusion of our adventure, to be run away with at last; for certainly in that equipage we should be wholly at the mercy of our charioteer.”

Douglas was at once amused and interested by this Scotch lass, who had sufficient of the accent of her country to add to the harmony of her voice. The day was remarkably fine, though rather cold for the season, which, added to what she thought a very agreeable rencontre, increased her Ladyship's natural colour, and animated every feature with that involuntary desire to please, every artless innocent female heart feels the first time they form a wish to be better acquainted with a companion of the other sex chance throws in their way.

She enquired how far it was to London, and being told four miles, wished to perform the journey on foot; shall we say, in hopes

hopes Douglas would offer to be their escort: though innate modesty, and a true sense of propriety, would have made her object to such a proposal. But the other two ladies reminded her they were neither so young, nor so fond of walking as she was, and in a few minutes a Highgate stage appeared.

“ Bless me !” said the old lady ; “ well, we must not complain.”

“ Certainly not, grandmama, since we shall travel so safe ; but suppose we have our other four horses put to this smart vehicle, that we may make our *entrée* into the great city in our coach and fix. Then we might rattle along so fast people would not have time to peruse this fine scrawl upon the doors.”

The old lady now renewed her thanks to the friends, accepted the Baronet's offered arm, and Lady Isabella hastened in after her, before Douglas could assist her, who was therefore obliged to offer his hand to the
Gover-

Governess, and then, with Sir Charles, made his parting bow, half tempted to ask where he might pay his respects to the fair Scotch woman; yet fearful of appearing indiscreet, and still more of Sir Charles's raillery, he forbore expressing his wishes.— They then remounted their curricie, and as they drove past the carriage, the postillions and one of the footmen (who had remained behind to take care of the baggage) were tying it together, when Sir Charles said—

“ Let's ask who these ladies are ?”

“ Our curiosity would undoubtedly reach their ears,” replied Douglas, “ and would not give them a very high idea of our politeness. From the description I shall be able to give the Duke of their persons, arms, and livery, I dare say he will know who they are.”

“ Most probably; but don't you think Lady Isabella is much handsomer than your ward ?”

“ What a question! Albertine is certainly a fine girl, but this lively young Scotch woman bids fair to be a first rate Belle; yet
how

how truly unaffected, therefore how infinitely pleasing! If a fine woman did but know to what advantage she appears before art and fashion have combined to rob her of her natural graces, there would not be a coquette among our titled dames."

"Bravo, George Douglas! I sincerely pity your fair ward; this rencontre has been truly inimical to her interests; not that I suppose you would have offered her your hand, admitting there had not been a Lady Isabella in the case, but I will swear you never will now."

"Pray proceed; lose yourself in endless conjectures upon the state of my heart, Creighton. I am not quite so absurd as you suppose me; I have been in love!"

"Yes, soberly, as Lady Grace says, but you are no judge of that passion, George.—Esteem, veneration, and gratitude were all blended with your former sentiments of that nature; now can you lay your hand upon your heart, and say, Upon my honour, Charles, I don't

I don't care three pence whether I ever see her Ladyship again?"

"I sha'n't humour you so far; nay, to be very honest, in hopes you will cease tormenting me, I do wish to be better acquainted with this fascinating, laughing, charming girl; yet, upon my honour, I am in no haste to marry."

"I can't suppose you are.—But there is my cousin's house; I wonder whether he is in any haste to die after giving me all this trouble."

They both alighted, but were informed before they entered the house that the Counsellor was much better; and their visit, he assured them, completed his cure. At his earnest request they staid dinner, and laughed very heartily, during their drive home, at his fancying himself in any danger, merely because he had made rather too free with the bottle overnight. The Baronet was convinced some of the ghosts of his injured clients haunted him, though he allowed he had

had never heard his character impeached.— They parted at Sir Charles's door, as Douglas was going to spend the evening with some of his tavern acquaintance, and asked his friend to join their party, which was of course agreed to, and he promised to follow him into St. James's Square as soon as he had changed his dress. The Duke was not at home, which was a serious mortification to Douglas, who was really anxious to discover what name was added to that of Isabella.

“ Will the Duke be at home early?” he enquired. This was a question the servants could not resolve; he supped out.— How intolerably provoking! George thought while dressing, and it was not without some difficulty he concealed his chagrin from his friend. Dice had lost all their attractions; he played for a short time to avoid singularity, and was angry with himself he had brought Sir Charles, as it obliged him to stay till the last. Insensibly, however, repeated

repeated bumpers exhilarated his spirits, and he, as usual, exhausted his fine imagination, and seriously injured his constitution by entering into the spirit of conviviality which pervaded his companions; from whom he did not separate till the morning was far advanced, too fatigued and too much disordered by the quantity of wine he had drank even to think of his rencontre upon Highgate Hill.

CHAP. VI.

SIR Charles was at Durham House before Douglas was stirring. The Duke received him, and entreated he would prevent his nephew from exposing himself to any danger through his zeal to serve the Principal, as they had determined to set out for Dover the next morning. He thought it advisable to leave Douglas's Swiss valet in England, as he might be the cause of offence to the present set of French levellers; and to hire a carriage at Calais, lest the Durham or Creighton arms, which were conspicuous upon both their post-chaises, might excite the wrath of the Democrats.

The

The Duke was seriously representing the consequences of any imprudence to the Baronet, when Douglas joined them, protesting he would abjure all jovial parties.

“Your secession might bring about a sort of general reformation, Douglas,” cried the Baronet, “for you were the life of the whole company last night.”

Of this the Duke had not a doubt, but hoped he felt no serious ill effects from his hilarity.

“None but what I richly deserve, uncle; an aching head, want of appetite, and more than common inclination to be lazy. I thought of calling upon my ward, as she may wish to send some letters to France, for her mother had many friends there; but I shall write her a note, for I don’t mean to stir out.”

“A little air might be of service to you,” replied the Duke; “you really don’t look well; I almost wish you would have some advice.”

“You are much too good, my dear uncle; the only cure for disorders brought on by intemperance, is sobriety, and I mean to practise that for some time at least; but I positively am not at all inclined to move from home. If you are disengaged, Charles, do spend the day with us; remember we start at five to-morrow morning.”

“I will be at this door to a second, for we travel in my post-chaise to Dover, mind!”

“Oh with all my soul,” replied Douglas; “but *a-propos* to travelling, have you mentioned our yesterday’s rencontre to the Duke?”

Sir Charles answered in the negative, and George told the story, minutely describing the arms, livery, and figure of the ladies he was so earnest to discover.

“The elderly lady,” replied the Duke, “I know was the Honourable Mrs. Duncombe; the younger one I presume was Lady
Isabella

Isabella Kinrofs, only daughter to the late Earl of Donalbain. By your account she bears a very strong resemblance to her mother, the much-admired Helen Duncombe, for whose sake Lord Donalbain and myself fought a duel. I came off conqueror, but he obtained the prize, much against the young lady's and her mother's consent; but pecuniary obligations of a most unpleasant nature forced Mr. Duncombe to exert his parental authority in favour of the Earl, though I flatter myself he had rather have bestowed his daughter upon me; and from that period I dropped all acquaintance with his family. Lord and Lady Donalbain have both been dead some years, and the title is extinct; but it is surmised it will be revived in favour of Lady Isabella's husband, should she ever marry, and of that there cannot be a doubt. Her immense fortune alone must procure her a numerous set of admirers, among whom she will doubtless be permitted to make her own election, as I can suppose you, my dear fellow, are the only young

man of fashion likely to be rejected by her guardian, General Clare, and that because you are a Douglas, and the nephew of her father's rival."

An involuntary sigh, occasioned by this declaration, startled the Duke, who had been too well acquainted with the pangs of hopeless love, not to dread the idea of his nephew bestowing his heart upon the only woman in England whose friends were likely to reject his suit. However, not chusing to mention his suspicions any farther, he turned the conversation again upon their journey, and Douglas resolved, as many have done before him, to forget such a person as Lady Isabella Kinrois existed.

Sir Charles spent the day with him, and was punctual to his morning's appointment. He, as well as George, had taken leave of the Duke over night ; the latter had promised to return with all possible speed, and joined the Baronet the moment he entered the hall,
and

and immediately preceded him to his chaise. Having stepped in, Sir Charles was preparing to follow, when he was fairly thrown down upon the pavement by the Newfoundland dog already mentioned, in his haste to join his master, with whom he had travelled in the carriage up from Brighton, and had also accompanied him several times in his excursions round London when he was alone. As the Baronet received no hurt, he laughed at his accident, and a servant was ordered to take charge of the dog, but he chose to stay where he was; having crept under the seat, and growled when the servant attempted to pull him out. The Baronet voted for his being of the party, as he certainly was very deficient in politeness, therefore might improve in that respect in France; and he would take care in future to give him the *pas*. Neptune was in consequence permitted, to his no small delight, to keep his place.

Nothing of moment occurred during their journey ; they reached Dover between five and six, and walked down to the port while their dinner was preparing, understanding several packets were coming in. The passengers from on board one were just landing as they reached the quay, and they were contemplating their woeful countenances, when Neptune sprung forward, and put his two dirty paws upon the shoulders of a gentleman ascending the ladder, placed for the company to land, and ran his nose in his face. Such a sudden and unexpected welcome so startled the person upon whom the favour was conferred, that he had nearly fallen backwards ; but owing to the support of the bye-standers, he escaped with the print of Neptune's joy on recognizing his former master John Mackenzie, who no sooner raised his head than he knew the dog, and looked very anxiously round him for the person to whom he had sent him from Lausanne, and felt very happy to hear himself
greeted

greeted by the well-known voice, and welcomed very cordially to England.

He returned George's compliments with equal politeness, hoped Mr. Elton, senior, was well, and readily agreed to accompany the friends to their inn. Neptune had no sooner welcomed Mackenzie, than he endeavoured to convince his present master he was still more attached to him, by playing a thousand gambols round him; nor would he resume his station in the background, till Douglas had patted his rough head, and applauded his sagacity. During their walk, he introduced Sir Charles and Mackenzie to each other, and informed the latter he now bore the name of Douglas, in compliance with the late Duke of Durham's will; but entered into no farther details respecting his family, and Mackenzie of course asked no questions. After dinner Douglas told him the Baronet and he were going to Paris for a few days, and enquired into the present state of France. He gave them his opinion

of their measures, and reasoned so well upon the subject, that George began to entertain a very high opinion of his understanding; and as he had long intended to exert his interest in his behalf, he asked him with a smile, (wishing to hear what his future plans were)—

“ Where did you leave your extravagant unprincipled pupil?” adding, “ I must ever despise him, though we are related; but I can assure you the Duke of Northington and Lord Beuifort are truly grateful for your unsuccessful attempts to work a reform in his conduct.”

“ They are very good,” replied Mackenzie. “ Lord John is now at Vienna, under the care of our Ambassador at that Court. I joined him at Venice, where I found him over head and ears in debt, and immersed in every scene of dissipation that city afforded; from whence, by the Duke’s desire, I accompanied him into Germany, and then pursued my journey through France homeward,

homeward, very happy to find myself relieved from such a charge : indeed I have made a vow never to undertake such a task again, as I may not always meet with such generous friends, Sir, as you and Mr Elton."

" In our place you would have acted exactly the same, Mackenzie, so pray say no more about the matter. My grandfather was happy he had it in his power to serve a countryman abroad, and I shall be equally happy to serve you at home. I shall be in London again in a short time, and entreat you would often look in upon me at Durham House, where I reside with my uncle, who is, as well as myself, in habits of intimacy with many of your friends, the Everly family, and many more ; and as I know the Duke will rejoice to see any body who has seen me so far on my journey, I will trouble you with a letter for him, which I must request you will deliver yourself, as he will have a thousand questions to ask about his nephew,

and has long known and esteemed you from report."

" You do me honour, Sir, by entrusting me with such a commission," was the reply.

Douglas called for pen and ink, as he understood Mackenzie meant to start early in the morning ; and when they took leave of each other, presented him with the letter, recommending him in the strongest terms to the Duke's notice, and renewing the invitation he had given him to Durham House.

The friends had intended to sail with the morning's tide for Calais ; but as the wind was contrary, and there was every chance of having not only a very long, but a very disagreeable passage, they agreed to cross with a Captain going to Boulogne, who assured them he should make that port in much less time than the other packets would reach Calais, and they would be five-and-twenty miles nearer Paris—two powerful recommendations in his favour ; therefore between
twelve

welve and one they stepped on board his vessel, attended only by the Swiss valet, whom they found it necessary to take, and Neptune.

Sir Charles and Douglas were very good sailors, having been both pretty well seasoned to longer voyages than this promised to be. There was a good deal of wind when they got out of port, more the Captain acknowledged than he expected, but assured his passengers there was not the slightest danger; his vessel had weathered many a tough gale, and was in excellent repair, and as the wind blew off the English coast, he would work up under the shore till he could strike across at once. He then thought it necessary they should lay to for about an hour, that they might go on with the tide, as the Boulogne boats would not put to sea in such weather, and it would be much safer than beating about upon the French coast at the risk of being driven on shore.—As no one objected to this proposal, they lay just off Folkestone till between five and six o'clock, when the boat was hoisted

out, and three men sent on shore for two others, whom they had observed making signals.

“ This is some smuggling trick,” said a passenger who had been very ill, “ and that is the reason why we have been kept here.”

Douglas declared they might have been at Boulogne, and was seriously angry with the Captain for vainly endeavouring to justify his conduct; when the boat returned with the two additional passengers, an Englishman and a Frenchman. The latter exclaimed in his own language, the moment he was on board—“ Thank God, I am safe!”

The Captain now gave orders to strike across, and the sails were properly set for that purpose;—the wind, instead of falling with the sun, as he had prognosticated, increased very much, and some of the company in the cabin began to be alarmed. Douglas and Sir Charles had refused to go below

below, the former alledging, (which was strictly true, as he had often been made to assist in working the ship when it blew any strong gales during his forced cruize) he was an excellent sailor, and should be of use in case of danger, and the latter not liking to be confined.—The Captain, knowing they were men of consequence, feared his conduct might be scrutinized, therefore thought proper to tell them, that the Frenchman he had just received on board was a Jacobin, he believed, and had published something in England which had induced Government to offer a reward for him, and the Englishman was rather concerned in the affair; but they were, notwithstanding, very honest men, and had often crossed with him, so he could not refuse to stand their friend in time of need. Douglas paid very little attention to his discourse, and Sir Charles swore he did not care who the devil they were, so he was but landed at Boulogne.

“ As

As they had no sooner lost sight of the English coast, than it blew almost a hurricane, the Captain endeavoured to persuade every body on board he had been in much worse gales; but while he was displaying his skill, a most violent gust split the mainsail into a thousand pieces, and every one, more or less, was now convinced they were in imminent danger. Douglas possessed far the greatest presence of mind; and perceiving the Captain as much or more frightened than any of the passengers, gave the necessary orders, and assisted himself in replacing the damaged sails. The last comers were expert seamen, and of great use in this dreadful emergency; and every thing that could be done to preserve the vessel, and enable her to reach the destined port, was put in practice under Douglas's direction, who had acquired his nautical skill in an excellent school, among men accustomed to brave the most tremendous storms, and perfect masters of their trade.

At

At last the Boulogne lights opened to their view, and every one prayed very fervently for one hour's reprieve; for in that time, if it pleased God, the Captain was sure they should make the harbour. The Frenchman capered about the deck, crying—

“ I shall be saved at last ! Had I remained in England, I should have been hanged ; now I shan't mind half so much being drowned close to my own country.”

Douglas could not help laughing at his absurdity ; but as they now drew near the harbour, he asked the Captain if he were sure there was water enough in port for the vessel to go in ? He hoped there was, he replied ; and as the wind stood, they had no other chance, in their shattered condition, than to run in at all risks. He knew the port to the greatest nicety ; the wind blew directly for it, and the water would be in sooner than usual. He took the helm himself as they approached, and repeatedly declared they were

all safe, and that he was sure he could get over the bar.

It was now half past eight o'clock, and the company began to breathe upon this happy assurance, as they had all, not excepting Douglas (who was better acquainted with the danger than any of the other passengers) thought they were going to the bottom every minute for the last hour and a half. The sailor whom the Captain could most depend upon, was ordered to go forward to look out, and give his master directions how to steer. Douglas, knowing he could no longer be of service, walked forward also with Sir Charles, who protested, in general with every one on board, he had saved the ship, and of course their lives. They soon saw and heard a number of people on the pier head, and at the moment they thought they were safe, just at the mouth of the harbour, a most violent swell of the sea, accompanied with a gust of wind, drove them some yards out of their course, and the vessel

vessel instantly struck. A general scream proceeded from the shore, and the sailors with one voice called out—"To the helm, to the helm, for God's sake! we are all lost!" Every one rushed to their assistance, and the next wave, which returned with violence, righted the vessel, and put her once more into motion.

It was only astonishing, Douglas observed, the wave that had relieved them, had not washed them all overboard. They got into port, however, in a few seconds, and no one can conceive how truly each rejoiced, but those who have been in a similar situation. The sailors all clung round Douglas to express their gratitude, declaring they should not mind sailing to the world's end in a fishing-boat under his orders; but their rejoicings were of short duration; as, owing to the Captain's late flurry, and not being able to distinguish the objects before him, he ran foul of another vessel that was in moorings, and the top-gallants getting entangled,

entangled, the mast, which was not very steady from the shocks it had undergone, gave way, and fell with a most horrid crash between Sir Charles and the Captain, stunned the latter, and sent the former overboard, who, in endeavouring to save himself, pulled Douglas after him. Neptune instantly jumped into the sea after them, and caught his master fast by the collar, holding his head as much above water as possible, and making towards the shore with him. Thus assisted, for he was an excellent swimmer, he was enabled to save his friend, who must else inevitably have been drowned. He seized hold of him by the hair, and the moment he recovered his senses sufficiently to understand him, desired him to lay fast hold of the dog's collar, which he instantly did; and though the faithful creature would not abandon his master, who in vain endeavoured to disengage himself from his hold, that he might be the more able to support the Baronet, swam forward with them till they were able to feel their legs, and walk on shore, as no soul came to help them, not
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from want of inclination, but from inability in many respects, and the bustle they were in to save those on board; as the vessel, having bulged, sunk in a very few minutes, and it was with difficulty those who could not assist themselves, were got on shore.—Douglas stepped up to his middle in water, to fondle the faithful Neptune, who seemed conscious of what he had done, and returned his caresses with more than usual glee; and at last they found themselves once more upon *terra firma*, amidst a crowd of spectators, who were loud in their praises of the dog, and overwhelmed both gentlemen with a multitude of enquiries.

Sir Charles was hardly sufficiently recovered from his recent salt water bath to talk; he therefore took the Swiss valet's arm, (who had escaped unhurt from being below, and was just landed as they came on shore), and thus supported, soon reached the British hotel—a very excellent inn, where both he and Douglas met a very hearty reception
from

from a fine fat old English landlady, who instantly dispersed the crowd which had followed them, and recommended a bumper glass of *liqueurs* to cheer their spirits. Her prescription met their approbation, and Sir Charles in a short time began to laugh at their past misfortunes. Their hostess vowed vengeance against their unfortunate Captain, who was always running people's lives into danger through his rashness, and recited many traits of his folly, which made the friends think they were peculiarly fortunate in having escaped so well, which she wholly attributed to Douglas's skill; and said the passengers might bless God he was on board, else they would, as sure as fate, have gone to *Davy Jones's locker*. She then advised their going to bed, as they had no clothes to change, and their baggage had sunk with the ship; she could provide them with shirts, &c. They followed her advice, and agreed to spend the next day at Boulogne, to make a few necessary additions to their wardrobe before they proceeded to Paris.

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CHAP. VII.

DOUGLAS'S first enquiry in the morning was after the Captain, whom they had heard over-night had been brought on shore lifeless; and notwithstanding he thought him very blameable, felt for his misfortune.—Estevus, to whom he put the question, said—

“ He understood he was alive, and that it was hoped he would recover, as he had a wife and a large family of children, and was very poor.”

“ That

"That often makes people desperate," replied Douglas; "but you shall carry him a trifle, which may be very acceptable."

"No doubt, Sir; and if you please, the landlady desired me to tell you, you must go to the town-house as soon as possible, as the Municipal Officers have been enquiring about you several times."

"These are the blessed fruits of French liberty, Charles," cried Douglas. "Come let us get up, lest we offend these new Romans; you mean to sink your Sir upon them, I hope?"

"Undoubtedly. Titles are very unfashionable things among this enlightened people."

Having thus decided, they hurried over their breakfast, and, accompanied by a guard, proceeded before the new Magistrates, wrote George Douglas and Charles Creighton in their books, and were provided with passports, and informed they were at liberty to pursue their journey as soon as they pleased, and

and to return to their hotel unattended. They profited by their permission to take the tour of the ramparts, where Douglas was rather surprised to meet the Captain Needham he had seen at Evian, and another young man walking arm in arm. The former no sooner recognized George, than he exclaimed—

“ Mr. Elton, how are you? How have you done since you left Evian? Going to England, or whither bound?”

“ To Paris, Captain, to see a celebrated actress we hear has turned even the heads of the patriots—Mademoiselle Parizot!”

“ That’s your sort!” cried Needham; “ but how does grandpapa relish these trips, my boy?”

“ Oh, the old gentleman understands reason,” replied George; “ besides, he is at Lisbon.”

“ He might almost as well be gathered to his forefathers—ha, Elton! if he has left you plenty of the needful, and d—n him, I believe he never stinted you. I am upon my
road

road to England, but stopped a few days here just *pour passer le temps*. Allow me to introduce you to Mr. Saville."

"George returned this compliment by introducing them to Creighton; and having seen all the town afforded, he asked Needham and his companion to dine with them. They readily accepted the invitation, and accompanied them to their hotel; though they chose to go home to make some alteration in their dress before they came to dinner. The landlady had seen them come in, and watched their going out, to enter the friend's apartment, saying, very uncere- moniously—

"Are you acquainted with those two young fellows, gentlemen."

"Very slightly, my good Madam," replied George. I met the Captain last summer at Evian—his companion I never saw before to-day, nor was I in habits of intimacy with the former; but he eagerly renewed

renewed the acquaintance, and I have asked them to dinner."

"That is all very well," quoth the landlady, "only don't let them win or borrow your money, for it is strongly suspected they are no better than they should be. Needham lives abroad, because he is so much in debt he dares not shew his face in England; and as for the other, I don't know what brought him here—nothing good though, I will be bound. However, be upon your guard, that is all."

"Thank you for your caution," said Sir Charles; "faith, we can find ways enough to squander our money without throwing it away upon such fellows."

The landlady retired, and in a short time the Captain and Saville returned; the latter by no means a bad figure, but intolerably vain. He soon began to enumerate his *bonnes fortunes*, and the different duels he had been engaged in, and even displayed a scar upon his wrist, occasioned by a wound

he received from a bullet, *as he said*.—Douglas and Sir Charles had some difficulty to keep their countenances, and put very little faith in his courage. He then reverted to their passage, and protested he should have thrown the Captain and his crew overboard, he should have been in such a d—d passion! An excellent dinner stopped his incessant prating for about half an hour, and he then descanted very learnedly upon eating, praised the cook, and acknowledged mother K—— kept a d—d good larder.

“We are at the Golden Lion,” said he; “’tis not half so good a house, but there are some d—d fine girls—you take me, gentlemen?”

Douglas was diverted by his folly, and pushed the bottles about briskly after dinner; Champagne was their favourite liquor, and he plied them with bumpers till they were both quite off their guard, while he was merely in spirits.

At

At last the discourse turned upon England. Saville swore he was almost tired of France, as there was nothing to be picked up among the patriots. Needham grew angry with him; but he had drank too much wine to understand either his looks or hints, and asked Douglas how long they meant to stay at Paris, as he had half a mind to go with them. This confederate offer met with no encouragement, and Needham said he should return home for the ensuing New-market Meeting, adding—

“ You are not much acquainted with any of the sporting tribe, Elton, I think I heard you say at Evian ? ”

“ Nor have I had time or opportunity to form any connexions among the gentlemen of the turf since my residence in England, though I don't know whether I shan't try my fortune. It is very good sport I am informed.”

“ Oh ! the finest in the world ! ” cried Saville ; “ but there is more made by bet-
ting

ting upon, than keeping horses. I have tried both; but a stud is so confoundedly expensive, though that would not be an object to you, Needham informs me; d—mme if I would not rather be grandson to a grocer if he were but rich, than related, as I am told you are, to half the nobility in the three kingdoms. But there is a d—d dashing fellow just come out, as rich as a Jew I have been told; he means to keep horses, 'tis reported: nay, you have heard of him I suppose, Mr. Elton?"

"I really don't know to whom you allude," was the reply.

"Why the Duke of Durham's nephew, the Honourable Mr. Douglas. They say he bids fair to be a nice pigeon; did you ever see him? The newspapers are full of his extravagance every day."

"Yes, I have frequently read his praises," rejoined Douglas, laughing, "and have had the advantage of seeing this renowned buck."

"And

“ And don’t you think him a d—d fine fellow ?” asked Saville.

“ You are intimate with him, I suppose ?” replied George, without answering his question.

“ Not absolutely ; I have dined with him twice in mixed companies, and I must say he has got a d—d deal more money than wit !”

“ Upon my soul I am of your opinion,” said Douglas.

“ Oh ! a poor ninny, take my word for it, and will soon shake his estate out of the elbows, if he don’t kill himself with drinking first. Between ourselves, he has taken a girl into keeping I turned off only three months ago, and has placed her in an elegant house in Berners Street. I was sauntering by a fortnight since (I have not been long in France), when the girl saw me, laughed, and beckoned me over—told me who she belonged to—said the poor dupe would not come that night—kept me to supper, and—you take me ?”

“ Oh perfectly !” rejoined Douglas ;
“ faith, this mad fellow’s folly will prove
an eventual saving to you : I suppose he
thought this sweet creature was a new face
imported out of the wouds of Yorkshire.”

“ Ten to one ; the cat has a monstrous
innocent look, has not she, Needham ?”

“ Why do you apply to me, when you
know I never saw her ?”

“ True, I forgot you have been on
this side the water these hundred years.”

Here their discourse was put a stop to by
a most violent dispute in the court-yard.—
They all rose, and approached the windows
which looked into it ;—the quarrel was be-
tween the landlady, and a gentleman much
about her own age and size ; politics was the
subject, and therefore thinking they might
at all events be amused, they sallied forth.
Saville was first, and got close to the
contending parties. The gentleman they
soon discovered was an English clergyman,
and

and a *patriote enragée*—the hostess was a still more violent Aristocrat. Their faces, naturally of a purple hue, were now like the gills of a turkey cock, so anxious were they both to convince the other of their error. The patriot's arms were above his head every three seconds, and brought down again with such violence, that his teeth chattered, and his very existence seemed to depend upon the cause he was so strenuously maintaining. The lady's hands were fixed upon her immense hips, and her head and eyes were in continual motion, till they frothed at the mouth like mad bulls. The words Douglas's party heard distinctly, were—

“ You are a good-for-nothing old witch, and it would be no matter if all such old cats were hanged !”

“ Blackguard ! pitiful fellow !” was the *retort courtois*. . “ It is only such poor wretches as you who preach up liberty and equality because you have nothing to lose.

I had always an aversion to your cloth, and only wonder I let you come into my house !”

“ Go to hell, you old witch, and take your house with you ! I believe you an’t fond of my profession ; the Devil will have a precious morsel when he lays hold of your fat carcase. I say and will maintain it, was the whole town of Boulogne to unite against me, and I was certain of going to the scaffold the next minute, the French are engaged in a most glorious cause ; and as for all their d—d impudent Nobles, they are like you, only fit for dog’s meat.”

“ D—mn it,” cried Saville to the landlady, “ don’t give it up, dame K——.”

She was only taking breath, and her passion rising beyond all bounds, she exclaimed, in a furious tone—“ Keep your advice to yourself, Sir !”

Needham had approached the patriot ; who fearful of being overcome, seized him by the coat.

“ I apply

" I apply to you, Sir—if I was your age, I would enlist in the French National Troops to-morrow."

" Go and be d—d !" cried Needham, snatching his coat of his hand. " I take their parts—no truly, I say they are a set of savage barbarians, and those who try to defend them, are little better. You ought to stay among them since you are so fond of them—like you, they are all either fools or madmen."

The landlady breathed, and shook her head at the Patriot, who hardly knew how to act. However, he gave Needham a most contemptuous look, and said—

" Pray, puppy, who are you that offer your advice so freely? That for you !" snapping his fingers under his nose.

" D—mme," rejoined Needham, " but I will cool your courage ! If it were not for your cloth, I would offer you a pistol ; but as it is, I will put you into that horse-trough."

"You," cried the patriot, "you be d—d for a boasting scoundrel!"

Needham could not put up with this, especially before Douglas and the Baronet; he therefore made a catch at the Patriot's collar, who seized him in his turn, threw him upon his back, and fell upon him with such force that he made the ground shake. This occasioned a general laugh. In a few seconds he recovered his breath, and leaving his antagonist to rise, triumphantly exclaimed—"That is the way to serve such fellows as you are!" putting himself in a posture of defence.

Needham slowly rose, with a face whiter than his shirt, put his hand to his side, and feared "the heavy villain had broke two of his ribs."

"And by God I'll break two more," was the reply, "if you don't keep your hands off!"

Needham was not inclined to put him to the trial, and even the old landlady recovered

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vered her good humour sufficiently to laugh at his misfortune. The Patriot capered, and said he had often chastised such impudent boys. Douglas and his friend had joined very heartily in the general mirth; and the Patriot, perceiving how much they had been diverted, thought they would prove staunch supporters, therefore looking at them, said—

“ Did not I serve him right ? If I had broke his neck, I should not have cared ; for I can’t bear to be contradicted by an obstinate old woman, or to be insulted by an impudent school-boy ; and I will assert, to the last moment of my life, that the French Revolution is a glorious work, and will be handed down to posterity with applause ! and I am sure you are of my way of thinking, Sir,” catching Douglas by the button hole, as he had done Needham just before.

“ I am no politician, Sir,” was the reply, “ therefore can’t pretend to enter the lists with you.”

“ Well, well, Sir, if you are going up the country, you will be convinced I am in the right.”

“ Hold your tongue, you cowardly rascal,” bawled out the old woman ; “ you dare not go to Paris, though you are so fond of liberty.”

“ Who spoke to you, you lying Devil ?”

Sir Charles advised him to drop the dispute ; for gentlemen should always give up to the ladies.

“ I will speak my mind before any man or woman either ! I now employ curates to do my duty while I take my pleasure ; I am independent, and I fear no man. My name is Crutley, and I live in Radnorshire ; and no man, be he of what profession he may, nor all the old women in France and England, shall persuade me out of my senses !”

“ Your zeal, Sir,” rejoined Douglas, “ is as much too violent as many of the late French decrees ; and a man must be in great want

want of argument who can so far forget himself as to abuse a woman, particularly when he is one of that sacred order we ought to look up to for instruction and example."

The Patriot did not relish this serious speech; but the landlady, once more in high spirits, roared out—"Bravo! my handsome countryman! I knew you would convince the paltry fellow I was in the right.—Go—set off—troop—get about your business, Mr. Parson; don't think to come to my house any more, for I want no such guests. Get out with you, *Mr. Liberty and Equality*; your countrymen, you find, don't like your doctrine better than I do. Pack off—no more of your preaching here—it don't suit your present congregation."

"Oh, d—mn the old hussy, what she has found her tongue again! I suppose you think all these gentlemen are going to turn bullies for you?"

"You impudent, dirty scoundrel," cried the old woman, "how dare you to mention the name of bully in my house! Get out of
it

it this moment, or I will claw your eyes out," making a dart to put her threats in execution.

Crutley slipped behind one of the bystanders, who tried to persuade the old woman to go in.

"Not I indeed," she cried, "while that fellow remains about my house," pursuing the Patriot through the crowd. "Get along with you out of my doors this minute! I will give you your dinner, and as for your paltry horse and chaise, which an't worth five pounds altogether, I will send it after you."

But the Patriot did not chuse to leave his treasure behind him. Douglas and his party returned to their room, but had scarcely resumed their seats round the table, and called for some fresh wine, before they saw the Divine drive off in a more miserable equipage than they could have supposed had
ever

ever left England. The landlady followed him into the street, and returned in triumph, her hands at her sides; came into their room, flumped herself down in a chair, and enquired whether they had ever seen such a rum parson in their lives, and abused him for his meanness when he was at her house before. Douglas asked her to pledge him in a tumbler of Champagne, as she must be fatigued.

“Very willingly,” she replied; “the fellow has made me lose my breath.”

She drank her glass, and then asked Needham how he did. It was in taking her part he told her he had been hurt. Without answering him, she started up, her face the colour of scarlet in a moment. She looked round her, but seemed unable to speak.

“What is the matter, Mrs. K—,” enquired Douglas.

“Who

“ Who is that under the table?” said she hastily, without turning her head.

The Baronet and Douglas burst out laughing upon perceiving that the tremendous object that had so alarmed this courageous lady was Mr. Neptune, whose usual resting-place was under the table.— She soon satisfied herself, and overcame her fright. The dog had happened to move, and touch her cloaths: however, she joined very heartily in their mirth, and called him to her. Till now he had not been noticed by Needham and Saville; they had seen him, they said, but thought he had belonged to the house. While they were admiring him, and Sir Charles was praising him for his faithful recent services, the old woman fetched him a large plate of meat, because she had heard of all his merits before. He soon became great friends with her, and when he had finished eating, she began to stroke him, enquiring how old he was. Douglas satisfied her curiosity, adding—
“ He

“ He was given me soon after I left Evian by the Mr. Mackenzie Lord John Villars left at Lausanne.”

“ I remember the circumstance,” cried Needham.

While he was speaking, the old lady was handling a very large silver collar he had round his neck, and said—

“ This would be a tolerable prize, now we are so much in want of money,” beginning to read the inscription aloud—
“ *The Honourable George Douglas, Durham House, St. James’s Square.*”

Saville turned paler than the Captain had done just before him, and dared not raise his eyes even upon his friend, who had participated in his unpleasant surprise, while the old lady remarked—

“ You left out the word *honourable*, Sir, when you wrote your name in our book?”

“ To

“ To humour the Democrafts, good lady,” replied Douglas; “ and my friend Creighton was equally modest, as he is Sir Charles, at your service.”

“ Well, egad! you don’t give in to the common failing of travellers in general. I have known many add titles to their names, but never knew any leave them out before.”

“ Why, Mr. Elton,” interrupted Needham, “ have you changed your name?”

“ By virtue of an act of Parliament since my return to England, Captain, and I may truly say, as your friend observed, I have also changed my nature; for I am the very mad, dissipated, foolish fellow he describes. I only hope the lesson I have received will prove of service to me; so come, push the bottle about, Charles, and let us drink to my reformation.”

The Captain, conscious he had not pretended to know the rakish buck Saville had
affected

affected to be so intimate with, rallied his spirits, and swore it was a d—d good joke; but was afraid it would terminate in his turning off the lady in Berners Street; while Saville fluttered, and hesitated so much, the landlady, who enjoyed his mortification, exclaimed—

“ Now I will be hanged if you han’t been shooting with your long bow, Saville; but this time you have caught a tartar, my lad. Your stories about *me*, for you always put yourself first, the Prince of Wales, and two or three other Noblemen, won’t go down with these gentlemen no better than they did with me,” rising to retire.

“ You must drink one more glass before you go, Mrs. K——,” cried Douglas.

“ I shan’t refuse you, Sir, that I may have the advantage of drinking your and Sir Charles’s health, and thanking you for the honour you have done my house,”

He

He poured her out a bumper, which she received with a curtsy, and a compliment to each. Then looking at Needham,—

“Your health, Captain—Mr. Saville, my service to you. You may now with some truth boast of having been in great company.”

Her provoking speech, added to what she had said before, so disconcerted the unfortunate man, that he rose, stammering out something about an engagement, and made a hasty retreat. The Captain, nearly as much confused, and unable to frame any plausible excuse for the intimacy which reigned between them, affected to recollect he had promised to escort some ladies to a concert, and made his escape after his crest-fallen friend, having assured Mr. Douglas he should look in upon him again before he left Boulogne.

“A

“ A good riddance of bad rubbish !” cried the old woman, loud enough for him to profit by her speech as he was shutting the door ; “ I believe Mrs. Odwyer wishes she had got rid of you and your friend, as I have done of my parson ; for there is six of one, and half a dozen of t’other.”

Douglas and the Baronet had seldom been more highly amused, and won the old lady’s warm heart by desiring her to make tea for them. Their guests served them for conversation the whole evening, and Douglas vowed he would renounce gaming, which was only proper to encourage such scoundrels as those who had just left them.

CHAP. VIII.

ON the second evening after they left Boulogne, Douglas and his friend arrived in Paris; but as it was very late, deferred visiting the Principal till morning, when they set out for the College as soon as they were up, talking over past scenes, and their juvenile adventures. Upon reaching the good man's apartments, they were informed he was not up. As he was in general a very early riser, George anxiously enquired if he were well.

“Not in very good health, Sir,” replied the servant. “These are such troublesome times, my master is very much altered since you was here last summer; but he will be

overjoyed to see you, I know, though I am sure he don't expect you."

"Then prepare him to see me in his saloon, and tell him another of his pupils, Sir Charles Creighton, is also very impatient to pay his respects to him."

The man retired, and the friends remained *tête-à-tête* for near a quarter of an hour, when the Principal joined them, leaning upon his servant. Though worn down by age and anxiety, he had still a smile for his favourite George, whom he welcomed in the most affectionate manner.— Then turning to the Baronet, said—

"You must excuse me, Sir Charles.— You know this is my own boy, but I can assure you I am truly happy to see you once more; 'tis a pleasure I little expected, and is therefore particularly gratifying to my feelings. But sit down, my kind friends, and trust me I am very sensible of the motives which have induced you to undertake this journey.

journey. But we will have our breakfast, and I will then explain why I wished, (as I wrote you word) my dear Douglas, I had some one, in whom I could confide, near me. I am only afraid your wish to oblige me—”

“ Ought to take place of every other consideration, my dear Sir,” interrupted Douglas; “ I am truly sorry to find you so unwell; but you must know you may, and ought to command my services.”

Sir Charles spoke to the same purpose, and with equal truth; for next to his mother and friend, Principal Douglas was the object of his esteem.

Their repast over, the good man thus began :—

“ I once thought of coming to England, my kind pupils; for, notwithstanding my advanced age, I find it necessary to leave this distracted country! I cannot take the oath they impose upon their Priests; therefore,
like

like the rest of their conscientious Clergy, I must seek an asylum elsewhere.— As a foreigner, I shall be permitted to depart in peace, and Cardinal Castel Nuovo has so strongly invited me to Bologna, that thither I mean to bend my wearied steps, that I may have the consolation to know, when I pay the debt I owe my Creator, my frail relics will be laid in consecrated ground. Your looks reproach me for my determination, George, and I know every thing you would say, but the climate of Italy is more congenial to my age than that of England; besides, various other reasons I could alledge why I prefer Bologna to London. We shall continue to correspond as long as I am able to hold a pen, so don't attempt to argue me out of my fixed resolves; but you will do me a most essential service, by taking into your care various things of value, and some papers of consequence, which the Count de St. Mars left with me. I don't chuse to take them to Italy, but the moment I arrive there, will write him word to whom I have entrusted

them, and desire him to let you know where he would have them sent. I have, besides, a small parcel which poor Mary Mackenzie committed to my care, containing all your father's letters to her, and a few trinkets, presents of his and your mother's, which would be of value in your eyes, she told me, and were all she had to leave to her favourite Mr. Harcourt's son. I was not to deliver it till I heard of her death, and she seemed sensible her latter end was approaching with hasty strides. This I conceived to be a sacred trust, and feel particularly happy I shall be able to deliver it into your own hands. I mean also to trouble you with some more of my money; so you find I wish to make you my steward, for I chuse to have as little cash or valuables of any kind as I can help about me, or in my baggage."

George readily promised to take charge of every thing he wished to send to England, and finding it in vain to hope he would bend his steps thither, he ceased to press him

to

to accompany him on his return; and having received the various packets he wished to commit to his care, at the end of three days he took a very reluctant leave of his first and most worthy friend, and set out for London by way of Dieppe, not having written to the Duke from Paris, thinking he should be in England almost as soon as his letter.

His Grace had been very uneasy from the moment of his departure, and was so anxious to oblige him, he waited upon the Secretary of State, with whom he had great interest, the moment John Mackenzie (after delivering his letter of recommendation) left Durham House, determined to exert all his influence in his behalf. His Grace being a Scotchman, and a very staunch supporter of the Crown, though he seldom solicited favours, had little more to do than ask, and have his demands granted. He was particularly eloquent in the cause of Mackenzie, adroitly hinting he was a friend of his nephew's,

phew's, and a *countryman*. The Minister, after a few minutes' reflection, and expending the usual routine of compliments upon such occasions, said—

“ There was a gentleman in possession of a very desirable place in his own office, who had long been in a bad state of health ; he was advanced in years, and would, he could answer for him, be happy to share the emoluments with any gentleman willing to relieve him from the fatigue ;—therefore to oblige his Grace of Durham, and his amiable nephew, he (the Minister) would procure the reversion of his place for Mackenzie, who must immediately enter upon the duty, and allow the present possessor to retire with a pension of two hundred a year out of the salary, which amounted to eight hundred pounds, besides perquisites.”

The Duke, of course, agreed to every thing in Mackenzie's name, presented him the following day to the Secretary, and saw him,

him, to his infinite satisfaction, settled in his office in five days more, assured it would afford Douglas the greatest pleasure to find him so well provided for in so agreeable a situation.

The travellers met with no adventures worthy recounting in their return home, and reached Durham House in perfect safety on the eleventh evening from their departure. The Duke, not expecting them, was from home, to George's great disappointment. Sir Charles therefore did not alight, as he was anxious to see what letters had arrived during his absence, but promised to return to supper. Douglas secured the money and other things he had brought over, when two packets for Albertine, one from Martinico, the other from St. Maloes, caught his attention, and he determined to carry them immediately into Hertford Street; his dress, which he did not feel inclined to alter, would be a proof he was but just returned, and his not having seen the

Duke would afford him a sufficient excuse to shorten his visit; therefore, leaving word he should be at home again in an hour, he set out to see his ward.

Neither Mrs. Shenstone nor Mademoiselle de Valcarné were at home, he was informed by the footman, but were expected every minute. George took the letters out of his pocket, and was going to give them to the man, and leave a message for Albertine, when he reflected that it would be more polite to address her in writing. Requesting he would provide him with materials for that purpose, he followed the man into the drawing-room, where, to his great surprise, and greater pleasure, sat Lady Isabella Kinross and Mrs. Macpherson. He apologized with the most graceful ease, for his unintentional intrusion, reverted to their former rencontre without affecting to know who they were, and mentioned what had brought him to Mrs. Shenstone's.

“ Then

“ Then I hope you mean to wait Made-
moiselle de Valcerné’s return, Mr. Douglas?”
said her Ladyship.

The arch expression of her countenance
rather confused George, who replied—

“ Your Ladyship has the advantage of
me, as I merely know I am addressing an
Earl’s daughter.”

“ Lady Isabella Kinrofs, Sir,” said Mrs.
Macpherson, and resumed her netting.

“ You were going to write, Mr. Doug-
las,” rejoined her Ladyship; “ don’t let our
presence prevent you, I entreat.”

“ I certainly had a presentiment of the
pleasure that awaited me,” replied George,
fixing his expressive eyes upon her face,
“ when I formed that determination, as I
was more than half-tempted to leave the
letters I have brought from Paris, and a
verbal message, with the servant.”

“ That would have been very contrary to etiquette, so pray write your note ; but I rather think your gay ward will be at home in a few minutes—she is merely gone to make some purchases with our Lady Abbess, as I call Mrs. Shenstone, who thinks the shops are seldom so crowded at this time of day as in the morning.”

“ Then with your permission, Lady Isabella, I will wait her return.”

“ I foresaw you would come to that resolution, notwithstanding pique had nearly hurried you away, because Mademoiselle de Valcerné, from not knowing when you would return, chanced not to be in the way to receive you ; a most serious crime, I must allow !”

“ Upon my honour your Ladyship puts a very wrong construction upon my actions ; one is seldom piqued with a friend.”

At that moment the stopping of a carriage, and a knock at the door, announced the return of Mrs. Shenstone and Albertine. Lady Isabella therefore merely gave George
a droll

a droll, incredulous look, which piqued him much more than his ward's absence, who ran up stairs the moment she heard who was in the drawing-room, and flew towards her guardian, who had risen, but had not advanced a step to meet her, expressing her joy to see him, and lamenting her having chose so unpropitious a moment to go a shopping, in terms so pointed, that she heightened both his and Lady Isabella's colour, and drew upon herself a severe look from Mrs. Shenstone, who had given her a very serious lecture upon her freedom of behaviour towards her young guardian the evening of her arrival in town, and determined to repeat it with additions the moment he was gone.

George presented her with the letters he had brought, saying—

“ Presuming they might be of consequence, Mademoiselle, from their having been consigned to Principal Douglas's care, I chose to deliver them myself, and took the

moment of my arrival, as I did not find the Duke at Durham House, fearful I should not have another hour I could call my own for some time."—Then turning to Mrs. Shenstone, he paid his compliments, and said, as he had executed his commission, he should take leave, for he was very impatient to see his uncle, who might return home during his absence.

"Bless me, Guardian, I am sure you need not be in such a hurry," interrupted Albertine; "why you won't allow me time to ask you a single question, or enquire about a single person."

"I did not see any of your acquaintance, Mademoiselle; the perusal of your letters will therefore afford you more pleasure, and be more gratifying to your curiosity than my conversation. Lady Isabella, I have the honour to wish you a good evening."

Bowing to Mrs. Macpherson, and taking a polite leave of Mrs. Shenstone, and a very reserved one of Albertine, he quitted the room,

leaving her petrified by his behaviour ; for to let our readers into a secret, they may have probably already guessed she was particularly anxious to bear the ancient name of Douglas, and had taken uncommon pains to persuade Lady Isabella Kinross (who had from the age of ten years spent a few months every year under Mrs. Shentstone's care, to enjoy the benefit of the first masters London afforded) he was her declared lover.

Her Ladyship had listened with indifference, and sometimes with *ennui*, to Albertine's animated description of her guardian ; but the moment she discovered Mr. Douglas and the elegant stranger she had met upon Highgate Hill, were one and the same person, her gentle heart felt a pang for which she was unable to account. Yet Douglas's eyes were very expressive ; he certainly wished her to understand his ward was more indifferent to him than herself, and his behaviour did not induce her to put

G 6

much

much faith in Albertine's report of his sentiments. Such were her reflections, while that young lady, with undissembled chagrin, tore open her letters, just glanced her eyes over those from Martinico, and without hardly deigning to look at more than the direction of the others, threw them into the fire.

“ Mr. Douglas seemingly need not have been in such haste to deliver your letters, Ma'am,” said Mrs. Shenstone; “ I dare say he would not have taken the trouble to bring them himself, had he known they were of so little importance.”

“ Goodness, Ma'am, what can an old Nun have to write about? I am very little interested in her lamentations about the abolishing of Convents. My mother might have consoled with her, but I can't think why she pesters me with her nonsense!”

“ I dare say she would not put your patience to the severe trial of reading any more
of

of her letters, if she knew the use you made of them."

"Why, you are as serious as my guardian, Ma'am. What harm is there in burning a stupid letter addressed to myself?"

"Infinitely less, Ma'am, than in treating Mr. Douglas with a degree of familiarity very inconsistent with mine, and, depend upon it, with his notions of female delicacy. Your behaviour might, if he possessed less sense, flatter his vanity; as it is, you made him blush. I appeal to Mrs. Macpherson for the truth of my observation."

"There is a modest degree of familiarity I would always encourage in young ladies," replied the Governess, "when in company with intimate friends of either sex; but it requires great discretion to attain the just medium between affected reserve, and that proper freedom of manners which never oversteps the bounds prescribed by delicacy.—Young people ought particularly to reflect upon the age of the gentlemen they address; respect for him will prevent them from being

too

too free with an elderly man, and respect for themselves ought to have the same effect when addressing a younger one. Our sex certainly ought to be courted; to reverse that rule must lower them even in the eyes of the very person they wish to captivate."

Albertine listened in sullen silence, more angry with the insensible Douglas than with the two tiresome moralists, whose lectures, she thought, were wholly owing to his treatment of her, which was intolerable, and she wisely determined to persevere in her present conduct till she either became the object of his love, or of his aversion. Had she a rival? Vanity answered in the affirmative. Yes, he had disposed of his heart during her stay at Brighton; if she could but discover in whose favour, she would endeavour to make him as miserable as the bare surmise made her.

Meanwhile a sentiment he was almost unconscious of, gained ground in Douglas's bosom.

bosom. Lady Isabella Kinross, decked in all the charms of artless simplicity, haunted his imagination ; and the painful reflection, that he was perhaps the only man who might o t be allowed to aspire to her hand, rather served to increase, then check his growing partiality. He found Sir Charles at Durham House, and they were still at tea when the Duke came home, overjoyed to see his beloved nephew, and hastened to tell him how fortunate he had been in his application respecting Mackenzie. George's sincere expressions of gratitude for the trouble he had taken, were very gratifying to his Grace, and in his opinion incontrovertible proofs of the goodness of his heart. He listened with attention to his account of their journey, shuddered at the danger they had escaped, laughed over their adventure at Boulogne, and was very glad the Principal meant to leave France.

Douglas next mentioned having again seen Lady Isabella Kinross.

“ I knew

“ I knew Mrs. Duncombe had left her in London,” replied the Duke, “ but not under whose care.”

“ Did you see that lady then, Sir ?”

“ I had that pleasure ; we have ever esteemed each other, and were she only to be consulted in the disposal of her grand-daughter, I should not have told you a Douglas must not pretend to her hand. But General Clare, her great uncle, and also her guardian, has never forgiven my interfering with their family arrangements ; so let him look round among the sons of our Nobility for a husband for his ward. I am sure you are not inclined to humour him so much as to ask what he would be so happy to refuse—his consent to address the young lady.”

George was in that respect of his uncle's opinion, but determined nevertheless to endeavour to make himself an interest in the heart of Isabella, and if he succeeded, to ask no other person's consent to their union.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

LITTLE of moment had occurred in the Mackenzie family since Douglas's visit, till the return of their son. He had wrote them a full account of the kind and generous treatment he had experienced from the Mr. Eltons, at Lausanne, and informed them of his determination to return home as soon as he had got rid of his pupil. This by no means met Lady Mackenzie's approbation, who told him, the moment she saw him, he would never be worth a baubee.

"Ye should have had a little indulgence for the young mon; wha was his keeping a mistress tull ye, while ye kept the
filler ?

filler? Fathers nae like to be told of the faults of their children, boy, and ten to one ye have made an enemy instead of a friend of the Duke of Northington. But aw my gude advice has ever been thrown away upon ye; however, cultivate the friendship of these Eltons; they are rich, and seem to have taken a liking tull ye; and let me tell ye, a rich merchant is a better friend than a pure Lord."

John said very little in reply, nor did he mention having met Douglas at Dover; of course took no notice of the letter he was the bearer of to the Duke of Durham, which he delivered as soon as he had paid his respects to the Duke of Northington, who expressed his approbation of his conduct in the strongest terms, acted in a most liberal manner respecting his salary, and as a farther token of regard, presented him with a deed entitling him to a hundred a year for life out of the revenues of the Northington estates. This, added to what the late Lord
Everly

Everly had left him, would, he thought, support him very genteelly, independent of his family, and was therefore doubly acceptable. The Duke of Durham's reception was still more flattering; Mackenzie was eloquent in the praises of his nephew; recited, with heartfelt gratitude, the various obligations he had conferred upon him even to sitting up with him during his illness, and other traits of his generous benevolence, which endeared Douglas still more to his Grace, and gave him a high opinion of Mackenzie, for whom he got the Minister to provide, as has been already related.

John could neither express his gratitude nor feelings upon this new occasion. To be thus promoted was far above his most sanguine expectations, which had led him to hope Douglas, upon his return, might exert his interest some way or other in his favour; but to find himself thus high in office at once, and desired to consider the Duke of Durham as his friend, who also presented him

him with a Bank note of five hundred pounds, in his friend the Secretary of State's name, as a *douceur* just to equip himself to enter upon his office, which might put him to some expence, made him fear the whole was the illusion of fancy! But soon convinced he was become a great man, and as perfectly that the *douceur* was a present of the Duke's, he made what he thought a vain attempt to thank his noble benefactor, whose own generous heart overflowed with delight to find he had made so truly deserving an individual completely happy.

As soon as he was installed into his new office in proper form, and had undergone all the necessary ceremonies, he communicated the agreeable tidings to his father and mother. Never did a more instantaneous change take place in the behaviour of any two people. Johnny was always the darling of Lady Mackenzie's heart—she had long foreseen he would do her mickle honour. Oh, the Duke of Durham was a jewel

jewel of a mon. she need nae be told he was a Scotchman, sin he had rewarded the merits of her dear bairn;—and the Knight, who thought a fresh road to preferment was opened to himself, actually shed tears of joy.

John knew his parents were incapable of participating in his feelings, therefore forbore entering into any farther details concerning his promotion, than that he owed it to the Duke of Durham, who had interested himself thus warmly in his favour at his nephew's recommendation, whom he (Mac-kenzie) should ever consider as the first and most noble of all human beings.

Having imparted his intelligence, and listened with infinite patience to their joint congratulations, he left them to talk the matter over, as he had a great deal of business upon his hands; and neither wishing to humour them, nor punish himself, was resolved to take a lodging near his office,
where

where he might enjoy the company of his friends, and keep up appearances with his family, which he knew, so thoroughly acquainted as he was with their dispositions, he should find next to an impossibility under the same roof.

The moment he was gone, a family council was called; Margaret and Archibald never agreed except when their interest was concerned, upon which occasions they would even give up to the superior judgment of each other, and were particularly obedient to the Knight and his Lady. They had been ordered, on pain of her Ladyship's displeasure (Sir Archibald's was a matter of course) not to mention George Harcourt's visit to John. She might, perhaps, do it herself at some future period, but till that time arrived, they were to forget they had ever seen him: and she had been punctually obeyed. Having commented for some time upon John's brilliant prospects, her Ladyship thus continued:—

“ Now

“ Now, Archy, ye ken yere brother is a great mon ; during the short time he has been at home, ye have nae had one serious quarrel, and now, boy, be sure, as ye value my blessing, to avoid it. Let him have his ain way ; if he says black, tis nae yere place to contradict him, and if he says white, be exactly of his way of thinking ; aw great folks ought to be flattered, and though he is yere brother, if ye dinnae please him, he will never exert his interest in yere favour. Oh ! if he could but introduce me to his noble patron, it might be the making of us aw ; for our family is as auncient as ony in aw North Britain. However, we mun turn with the times, ye ken, like the Vicar of Bray ; if I was in France, I would tune *Ca Ira* with the *Poissardes*, and in London I can join in chorus in *God save the King !* Wemun auways praise the bridge that carries us safe over, rotten or sound !—As for ye, Margaret, ’tis as much to yere interest as Archy’s tull pay yere court tull Johnny ; let us aw try to make home agreeable to him,
that

that he mun nae think of spending his filler among strangers; and wha kens but ye mun pick up a husband among his friends—ye have got gude blude in your veins, and that is a great thing. I shall offer him the best apartment, when opportunity offers, to receive his ain company; he will be obliged to give handsome treats, and wha is sae proper to provide them as mysel. He has nae thoughts of marriage at present, and God fend he never may; then his savings will revert to his own fameely. Sae mark my words, and treat him with proper respect, as ye hope to prosper yerefels.”

John was seldom at home, notwithstanding the fulsome attention he met with, which he very properly placed to its true source, and took no notice of her Ladyship's repeated hints concerning the whole house being at his command, but determined to pay for his board while he did stay, and to remove as soon as he could do it with convenience. My Lady therefore repeated her lectures

lectures to Archy and Margaret daily, and desired them to redouble their attention to the great mon. While she was laying plans for the future, and prognosticating many desirable events she foresaw would happen, the whole family received an invitation to dine at Everly Lodge on Easter Monday.

To say they were delighted would be faintly expressing their rapture at this un-hoped-for honour! Hitherto Sir Archibald had been the only one, John excepted, that had ever been thus favoured. Her Ladyship therefore immediately foresaw the most splendid honours merely awaited their acceptance; her favourite Margaret was already, in her imagination, the Honourable Mrs. Frazer, and John married to his Lordship's daughter, a most charming young woman. She declared Sir Archibald would shine among the next creation of Baronets, and of course soon be a Peer! her youngest son no longer a burthen to her, as he would be provided for in a manner suitable to his

birth and connexions ! A carriage was become almost a necessary appendage in her dream of greatness ; appearance was half the battle ; she should no longer be obliged to make such great savings for her children ; she should only have to study now how to do them honour, for she should float with the stream. Here was Lord Everly, who formerly thought himself so much above them, and merely left a card now and then at her door, finding they were noticed by greater men than himself, could court their intimacy ; for, she continued, “ to promote self-interest was the main spring of every body’s conduct.”

John had left word, in the morning of this memorable day, he should dine at home for the first time since his promotion. Her Ladyship had desired him, whenever he chose to favour them with his company, to fix his own hour, which would always suit them ; indeed, so truly was she inclined to oblige him, had he mentioned one in the forenoon,

forenoon, or the same hour in the morning, she would have agreed to either! She was exulting in the agreeable news she had to communicate, when he knocked at the door, and her first words were—

“ Weel, the Lord be praised for aw things, Johnny! we shall have the pleasure of yere company to dinner at last.”

“ You are devoutly inclined this morning, Ma’am; now, if it had not been for my uncommon good fortune, do you think you would have waited two hours beyond your usual time with such amazing patience?”

“ Hoot, my dear Johnny, did ye ever ken me complain when I knew business of consequence detained ye, as it has done to-day?”

“ I can’t resolve your question, Ma’am, as neither myself nor my business have, till very lately, been of any importance. But have not you received an invitation to dine out next Monday?”

“ Ye have guessed perfectly reeght, Johnny; I was just going to mention it. How came ye to be so wise, and how came it aw about, can ye tell me that? though gude troth, I need nae have asked the question.”

“ Why you are blessed with such an uncommon share of penetration, Ma’am, I can suppose you are in no need of any information I can give you. Therefore, instead of applying to me, pray favour me with your own conjectures.”

“ Nae, nae, Johnny, ye ken I was ainly joking, so do tell us, for nae doubt ye ken aw how and about it, wha is to be there, and every thing it is proper for us to hear.”

“ At my request then, Ma’am, Lord Everly has honoured you and all my family with this invitation, to afford me an opportunity of introducing you to my generous friend, benefactor, and patron, to whom I owe my life and my present lucrative post, the Hon. Mr. Douglas, nephew to the Duke of Durham; and I trust you will endea-

your, to convince him you largely participate in my unbounded gratitude."

"Oh Johnny, ye enchant my very soul! Ever sin ye mentioned this noble fellow, I have been praying chance might introduce me to him; but I nae comprehend aw the obligations ye say he has conferred upon ye. Saved yere life! when and where my bairn?"

"At Laufanne, Ma'am, as Mr. Douglas and Mr. Elton, junior are the same person."

"Mercy upon me, boy, ye quite surprise me! How is aw this? I little thought that gude young mon was a Douglas! He certainly kenned ye had as gude blude in yere veins as himsel, though the frowns of Fortune had reduced ye to a station so much beneath yere noble origin. Depend upon it we will return the noble fellow our thanks in a proper manner; he is an ornament to his country; our gude monarch ought to glory in sitch subjects, wha are sae capable, and sae zealous to reward merit!"

“ Pray go on, Ma’am ; you seem in a very fine strain,” rejoined John, very drily ; “ what a pity Mr. Douglas is not here to profit by your encomiums ! But believe me, I do not owe either his or his uncle’s friendship to my talents for flattery. Compassion first interested the former in my behalf ; his grandfather and himself judged me after their own hearts, and highly approved of that part of my conduct which did not meet your approbation, Ma’am. Yet Mr. Douglas is nearly related to the Northington family, and in particular habits of intimacy with the Marquis of Beuifort, and I am vain enough to fancy he wished to reward my integrity ; that must be my only merit in his eyes. I met him very unexpectedly at Dover ; he requested I would take the charge of a letter to his uncle, to whom he generously mentioned me ; need I say in what kind terms, since to his recommendation I owe my promotion, though positively, notwithstanding what I said before, I am absolutely at a loss to guess why so
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young and fashionable a man should interest himself so very strongly in my behalf, as I have not so very high an opinion of my merit as you seem to have."

"Weel, weel, modesty is very becoming in every body, Johnny; but if Mr. Douglas was nae sae well acquainted with yere merits, as I flatter mysel—I am, he was perhaps acquainted with yere origin; and ye ken my father was laird of Auchtentyre, and if every one had their reeght, ye would have been a Chieftain, and——"

"Z—ds, Ma'am, don't drive me mad with your absurdities—you will fancy yourself a Douglas soon! Be contented with your new title, but don't vainly imagine it places you upon an equality with the future Duke of Durham."

"Ye are auways sae passionate, Johnny; I nae pretend to put mysel upon a footing with yere noble friend; I ainly hope we did nae fall never to rise again."

“ Oh ! you have risen enough in all conscience, Ma’am. An’t you addressed as my Lady ? and an Earl’s wife can pretend to no greater honour ; it remains with yourself to be either ridiculous or respectable. Your noble title may do the former, your behaviour can only do the latter ; and permit me to hint, Mr. Douglas is accustomed to the most refined address, and is, take him all in all, one of the finest gentlemen I ever had the honour of being in company with ! ”

“ Nae trouble yere head about what I shall say, boy ; I kened how to compliment a great mon before ye were born, better than ye will at my age ! But I cannae divine why Mr. Douglas bore the name of Elton at Laufanne.”

“ Because it was the one his father bore before him, Ma’am ; he is a descendant on his mother’s side from the house of Douglas. But let us proceed to dinner—I want to be gone.”

Though his last speech was very unsatisfactory, Lady Mackenzie prudently forbore asking

asking any more questions, and all was hurry and bustle not to detain Johnny, and every means taken to make him depart in good humour. As soon as he was gone, her Ladyship exclaimed—

“ That boy gets sae impudent, Sir Archibald, he makes me lose aw patience sometimes ; but never interfere in our disputes, my dear ; I can auways bring him back to reason, ye perceive, and he will do us great honour, and that is aw we can wish in our children.”

“ True, my Lady ; and a young man that has made himself such friends in his own way as he has done, may be allowed a few liberties ; besides, he has the interest and welfare of his family at heart, I can plainly perceive.”

“ Ye may say that, my dear ; he was nae easy, ye perceive, till he devised a method to introduce us to his young patron. I should like to be mair acquainted with this

Mr. Douglas's character ; Johnny hints, ye ken, he owes his favour to his integrity, but I nae believe fitch a young fellow is nae open to flattery ; however, we mun feel our way, Sir Archibald—we may gain a little useful intelligence from Lord Everly ;—we will gang early, and I will put him upon the subject ; ye will have nothing to do but to follow my lead, and then who kens what may happen ? Archy may get a place as cheaply as his brother, and ye, my dear, now yere eye-sight begins to fail, may get a handsome pension for life ; though, thank God, we shall be able to support our dignity without any addition to our income, when our family is off our hands. As for the Duke of Northington and Lord Everly, they are nae worthy to be mentioned in the same day with Mr. Douglas ; I long of aw things to see him ;—he is nae married I suppose—ye would have nae objection, Margaret, to be Duchefs of Durham ?”

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“ She be Duchess of Durham !” grumbled out Archy, “ I shall as soon be Prince of Wales !”

“ Ye will auways be a furly fule, boy ; but ye mark my words, and make the most of the opportunity yere brother has afforded ye ; if ye play yere cards weel, ye may stand a chance of being maintained in idleness, and that will suit ye mightily ; for a lazier loon, not excepting that vagabond George Harcourt, never existed. So exert yere talents, and try to find out the weak side of this youth, as yere brother has done ; if he ainly recommends ye to his grandfather Elton, ye will nae be to be pitied ; and, Margaret, do ye set yere cap at him, and if he should say fast things to ye, but ye are nae fule—he won’t want money.”

“ But he may want beauty,” rejoined Archibald ; “ most men wish their wives to have either one or the other ! However, if you should hit his fancy, Peg, I shan’t so much mind escorting the Duchess of Durham about ; your title will make people forget your ugly phiz !”

“ I should wonder if you ever hit any body’s fancy,” retorted the offended Peg.

Lady Mackenzie interfered, and having once more restored peace, continued to anticipate the great rewards she foresaw awaited herself and children.

CHAP. X.

NOTWITHSTANDING the constant round of unceasing dissipation Douglas continued to move in, all his serious thoughts centered in Lady Isabella Kinross. Lady Dunraven, in whose company he had twice dined since his return from the Continent, and whom he had twice met in public, in vain exerted every power to please and captivate; he never remembered she existed but in her presence, and the pique originating in offended self-love, with which he had first beheld her after her marriage, had degenerated into the most cool indifference. He framed several excuses to visit his ward,
contrived

contrived to drop in at those hours he thought most likely to see Lady Isabella, but was as constantly disappointed; he therefore began to think she was purposely kept out of his way. As he never requested a *tête-à-tête* with Albertine, Mrs. Shenstone was always present during their interviews, and began to wonder at his frequent visits, which she was convinced did not originate in love for his ward, as the chief of his discourse was addressed to her, and he treated the young lady's *marked* advances with more than reserve, as he seemed to shrink from them with a sentiment bordering on disgust. Besides, he was frequently absent, and often buried in thought; perhaps Albertine reminded him of her mother, and he sought her society by way of alleviating that regret which it on the contrary seemed to increase. This was the most reasonable conjecture she could form, and perfectly accounted for his behaviour to the young lady.

She

She imparted her thoughts to Mrs. Macpherson in Lady Isabella's presence, and dwelt, unintentionally, so forcibly upon several trivial circumstances that happened during his visits, that her Ladyship began to hope a wish to see her brought him so often. An intuitive sentiment of mutual regard frequently occurs in congenial minds; and she determined, under some pretence or other, to enter the room during his next visit, hoping to discover she was the magnet which drew him into Hertford Street, yet dreading to find herself mistaken.

Mrs. Macpherson looked upon her pupil as a child, and would as soon have trusted her in Mr. Douglas's company as in that of any other gentleman. Till she had made her appearance at St. James's, there would be no thought of marrying her, and she was not to *come out* till she was seventeen, of course led a very retired life both in town and country; and, till she saw Douglas, did not understand the meaning of the word love, nor was she now absolutely

absolutely aware how deep an impression he had made upon her heart. But her natural gaiety began to forsake her ; at times she was reserved, pensive, and thoughtful, and a sentiment she was unable to define, made her envy those young ladies whose friends or parents did not object to their going into public with Mrs. Shenstone, while she was doomed to spend her evenings at home. How much happier Albertine de Valcarné was ! She enjoyed not only all the diversions London afforded, but the society of her guardian, and even to see him, what a pleasure ! But to be able, like his fortunate ward, to claim his protection, to address him as a friend, a brother, how enviable ! Albertine had certainly mistaken the nature of his sentiments—he was no lover ; but such an error was very excusable ;—besides, she was really to be pitied, as she repeatedly told Lady Isabella she must be miserable, united to any other man !

To

To talk of a beloved object is peculiarly pleasing to a youthful mind ; and as Douglas was the constant theme of Albertine's discourse, she became the favourite companion of Lady Isabella, who listened with infinite patience to details which would have seemed tedious to any other person. Sometimes Albertine tried to persuade herself the Duke of Durham was averse to his heir marrying a foreigner ; and Douglas's late want of spirits when in her company, was occasioned by love for her, and a dread of his uncle's displeasure, should he acknowledge his sentiments.

This was a point Lady Isabella never chose to reason upon, though her own good sense convinced her such a notion merely originated in her friend's vanity. However as from her alone could she hear of Douglas, she enjoyed the conversation of no one else ; and as neither Mrs. Shenstone nor Mrs. Macpherson saw any thing to disapprove in Albertine's conduct, manners, or expressions,

sions, setting aside her regard for her young guardian, they rather encouraged an intimacy between them, as they attributed Lady Isabella's want of spirits wholly to her retired life, which both thought, though in many respects very proper, was very ill adapted to her gay disposition; and no one was more calculated to amuse and enliven her than Albertine, whom even the pangs of hopeless love could not render dispirited for more than an hour at a time.

Meanwhile Douglas one moment formed the resolution to banish the interesting Scotch lass from his mind; and the next determined to devise some method to reveal his sentiments. The difficulties attending this last resolution were innumerable; to see her alone was next to an impossibility; to write to her very improper, not to mention the impracticability of delivering his letter, were he sure she would not resent such a freedom. But for Albertine's folly he might have made *her* his confidante; as it was, he
was

was perfectly aware of the consequences of such a step, and she was one of the last people he would have entrusted with his secret.

He passed his nights revolving different plans in his mind, but was unable to arrange any one to his satisfaction. His days were, as usual, devoted to pleasure, and the society of his gay companions, a party of whom he had engaged to dine with at Sir Charles Creighton's, his only friend, a short time after their return from Paris. The various belles of fashion became their subject over the bottle; most of them had seen Albertine in public, and Lord Beuifort swore she was a d--d fine girl, and he thought she would do honour to a Ducal coronet.

"That of Northington for example," replied Douglas.

"Oh faith, she would prefer that of Durham, and I have no wish to rival any man without a greater hope of succeeding."

"Upon

“ Upon my honour I neither feel nor profess any sentiment, save esteem, for my ward ; the sort of connexion which subsists between us has certainly put us upon a very familiar footing, but believe me the word *love* never has, nor never will be, introduced into our conversation. She is entitled to my friendship, my protection, and my regard ; and I shall be happy to see her united to any man likely to make her so, and capable of doing justice to her merit.”

“ Faith, I wish she would condescend to distinguish me,” said Colonel Frazer ; “ for I seldom have seen a woman more to my taste.”

“ Then push your fortune, Colonel,” cried Lord Valmont, “ and entreat that most indifferent of all mortals, her guardian, to introduce you. I am strangely of opinion at his demise the Durham title will be extinct ; he don’t think it any honour to be distinguished by one of the most beautiful and fashionable women in town, whom his cruelty forced into the arms of a man she
must

must despise; for where will you see such another insignificant being as Lord Viscount Dunraven?"

"I have repeatedly blushed for the ungallant mortal myself," rejoined Lord Beuifort; "I only wish she would turn her thoughts upon me for example—a duel I should not fear; and as for damages, who would mind being ruined to attain such immortal honour? Intrigues though, really grow too common—they hardly add to a man's celebrity; I even question whether our profiles would get into a magazine. I must wait till her Ladyship is more the rage; however, I will give you her health in a bumper."

"I will pledge you with all my soul," cried Douglas, "and plead guilty, to save the Court trouble, of want of gallantry; for if I never attain celebrity but through my amours, the printers of the scandalous magazines will leave off trade for want of intrigues."

"Why,

“ Why, they are going out of fashion,” said Lord Beuifort. “ Plague on’t, if I don’t approve of your reasoning, Douglas ; all the women are mad after you, because you set a proper value on yourself ; I will do the same. Once ranked among the loungers, I shall become the object of their admiration ; so what say you to adjourning to the Opera ? We shall be in time for the last dance, and I want to commence my attack upon Lady Dunraven, by convincing her I don’t care three pins for her.”

“ Let us drink one bumper to your success first,” said Sir Charles.

“ Oh, by all means, in half pint tumblers if you chuse ! Who means to accompany me to witness the effects of your kind wishes ?”

Several of them agreed to be of his party ; Douglas, having no other engagement, was of the number, and by way of looking round them, they went first into the pit. Lady Dunraven was in her box, and as far as looks

looks could express her thoughts, invited Douglas to join her ; but having perceived Mrs. Shenstone and Albertine in the pit, a hope that he might accidentally hear Lady Isabella Kinross mentioned, induced him to make towards them. The Marquis protested he would take advantage of his behaviour to pay his court at his expence ; however, having paid his compliments to his ward and her chaprone, unwilling to let the former suppose a wish to see her had brought him to the Opera, he followed the Marquis into the Viscountess's box, and took his station behind. Her looks were so strongly indicative of her pleasure, and she conversed with him so wholly inattentive to what was going forward on the stage, that Albertine, who had followed him with her eyes, set her down for the hated object of his affection, and anxiously enquired of Mrs. Shenstone who she was ?

Her looks and manner of speaking induced that lady, having satisfied her curiosity, to
pay

pay more attention than she would otherwise have done to Douglas and her Ladyship, and, like Albertine, to suspect they were not indifferent to each other. But in a short time he resigned what to many appeared his enviable situation, and joined the rest of his party behind the scenes till the conclusion of the dance, when he accompanied them into the coffee-room, where Lady Dunraven, highly offended by his defection, of which the Marquis's polite raillery had made her more sensible, passed him without affecting to notice him. His cousin touched his elbow as he followed her, saying, in a whisper—

“ Give me joy ! you have done me infinite service ! ”

George smiled, and entered into conversation with Mrs. Shenstone, whom Albertine had contrived to draw near him, regardless of the inattention with which he treated her. She addressed him upon twenty frivolous subjects, till tired of her incessant prating,

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prating, he was walking from her just as Mrs. Shenstone's carriage was announced.

A wish to be particularly polite to that lady induced him to attend her to it; and they had just reached the outward lobby, when a young man very genteelly dressed, fell accidentally (as he said owing to his foot's slipping) against Mrs. Shenstone, and contrived by this clever manœuvre to snatch a very handsome watch from her side, unperceived as he hoped; but his rudeness, as he deemed it, having drawn the eyes of Douglas upon him, he saw him endeavouring to secure his prize, not being very expert at his trade. He instantly let go Mrs. Shenstone's arm, seized the smart pickpocket by his powdered pate, and fairly flung him at his feet; he dropped both the watch and his hat as he fell. The sight of the former instantly informed the surrounding crowd why he had been so roughly handled; it was immediately restored to Douglas, who presented it to Mrs. Shenstone, assuring her he was very happy he had been so fortunate

as to prevent her losing so valuable and so necessary a trinket.

That lady had been so excessively frightened, though she had felt her watch going, she had not been able to give the alarm; and trembled so violently while she attempted to thank her protector, that he insisted upon seeing her safe home. Therefore leaving the public depredator to the discipline of the multitude, (who, finding he would not be carried before a Justice, swore they would duck him), he supported Mrs. Shentone to her carriage, followed by Albertine, who, could she have caught his attention, meant to have fainted. As it was, she merely screamed when she saw the pickpocket fall, and excited the pity of the bystanders so much, a very genteel man offered her his arm, and put her into the carriage to her friend.—Douglas thanked the stranger, and stepped in after them, desiring his servants to follow with his chariot. Courage had made him seize the robber, and humanity had made

him

him offer to escort Mrs. Shenstone home ; but the moment they were upon the move, the idea that this event might procure him the pleasure of seeing Lady Isabella solely engrossed his mind.

Mrs. Shenstone, as may be supposed, felt highly flattered by his conduct ; and as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, and Albertine ceased expatiating upon her dreadful alarm, she was lavish in expressions of gratitude. Douglas laughed at the stress she laid upon what she termed his gallant behaviour, and protested he conceived what he had done, was merely his duty towards the public ; while Albertine affected to believe he had proposed seeing them home, because he thought it a sort of duty incumbent upon him as her guardian. To convince her of her mistake, he presented his arm to Mrs. Shenstone the moment he alighted, and conducted her into the house, leaving Albertine to follow at her leisure. But for the faint hope he entertained of seeing Lady Isabella,

Isabella, he would have taken his leave at the door ; as it was, he ascended the stairs in total silence. The servant who had preceded them, opened the door of the back drawing-room, where sat her Ladyship and Mrs. Macpherson ; the former was reading aloud, but stopped the moment the door opened, and starting up, was near expressing her surprise at the unexpected sight of Douglas, whose sparkling eyes and animated countenance were flattering proofs of the truth of her suspicions respecting his visits. She lowered her eyes under his piercing gaze, curtsied in return to his elegant bow, and hoped Mrs. Shenstone had been amused.

“ I had like to have paid very dear for my pleasure, my Lady ; but, thanks to Mr. Douglas, I escaped with only a fright, and he was so obliging as to insist upon seeing us home. Pray be seated, Sir.”

Such an exordium naturally raised the curiosity of her auditors ; every thing that concerned

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concerned Douglas must be interesting to Lady Isabella, who anxiously requested an explanation, which he gave with infinite drollery, and described the culprit's dismay so ludicrously, that her Ladyship laughed very heartily, though she acknowledged, like Mrs. Shenstone, she should have been very much frightened at the moment.

Mrs. Macpherson congratulated her friend upon having such a protector so near. Douglas declared they would almost persuade him he had done something heroic.

"Oh, this is not your *coup d'essai* in knight-errantry, Sir!" said Lady Isabella; "I have not forgot your kindness to my poor grandmama and me!"

"Your Ladyship, like Mrs. Shenstone, seems so bent upon increasing my vanity, I will make my escape before I fancy myself one of the heroes of antiquity," rising to depart.

Mrs. Shenstone, having addressed a few words to Mrs. Macpherson in a low voice, entreated in the most earnest manner he would favour them with his company to supper.

“ If I were not fearful I should derange you, Ma’am, by taking such an advantage of your gratitude, I should be very much tempted to accept your offer ? ”

“ Oh, we positively can’t part with you, Guardian ! ” cried Albertine ; “ you are not engaged to sup with Lady Dunraven, I hope.”

“ Raillery is like wit, Albertine, a very awkward weapon in unskilful hands,” replied Douglas, with a look far more expressive than his words.

Mrs. Shenstone pressed her invitation, and he agreed to oblige her, as Lady Isabella’s expressive eyes taught him to believe she would not think him an unwelcome guest.

Her

Her point gained, Mrs. Shenstone retired to give some orders, and Albertine followed her out to fetch a trinket she wished to shew her guardian, wholly unabashed by his recent reproof. For a few seconds silence prevailed among the remaining three; Mrs. Macpherson continued her usual occupation of netting, Lady Isabella hardly dared raise her eyes, and Douglas wished, but did not venture, to turn the conversation upon the subject nearest his heart; though, unaccustomed to dissemble his feelings, he found it a very hard task. At last, taking up the book her Ladyship had laid down upon his entrance, he said—

“ May I presume, my Lady, to inspect your studies ?”

“ You have my free permission, Sir; it is a volume of the celebrated Racine’s plays.”

“ You are perfect mistress of the French language, no doubt, by your choice of such an author, Ma’am ?”

“ Oh hardly sufficiently so to understand all the beauties of that elegant poet, though I hope I shall improve under the tuition of your ward. Mrs. Shenstone speaks it with infinite fluency ; but when I am at home, I am quite out of practice.”

“ Why it was not so much the fashion when your grandmama and I were young, Lady Isabella,” said Mrs. Macpherson, “ though for your sake I have often wished I understood it.”

A very fortunate discovery, thought Douglas, as he turned over the book with apparent indifference, and enquired, “ Which of these plays do you prefer, Lady Isabella ? ”

“ Athalie, Sir ; I should have enjoyed seeing that tragedy represented at St. Cyr ! ”

“ Yet Phedra is reckoned not only the *chef d'œuvre* of Racine, but of French poetry in general.”

“ Do read me a scene, Mr. Douglas.”

George instantly turned to the famous declaration of Hippolytus, (reckoned the most

most elegant tale of love ever told by any author in any language). He dared not trust himself to read it, but turning down the leaf, said in French—

“ How truly do the sentiments of Hippolytus accord with my own ; he speaks the exact language of my heart !”

He then reverted to Athalie, and began to read aloud. Mrs. Macpherson had not been attending to him, and Lady Isabella, hardly daring to raise her eyes, listened in silence. Neither his actions nor his speech needed any illustration ; perfectly acquainted with the speech he alluded to, she could have replied with Aricia, “ *J'accepte tous les dons que vous voulez me faire.*” The entrance of Mrs. Shenstone, and return of Albertine, relieved her in some measure from her confusion. Douglas stopped, but they requested him to proceed, and declared Racine acquired fresh beauties from his energetic reading. Supper interrupted his
1 5 lecture,

lecture, and he returned the book with a reference to the marked page, understood merely by himself and Lady Isabella; and much too delicate to offend the person to whom it was addressed, or to be noticed by the rest of the company, he took his leave immediately after supper, believing he had made himself understood, and hoping his tender acknowledgment had at least been received with indulgence. Lady Isabella was too much agitated, and too happy to sleep. She read and re-read Hippolytus's declaration before she went to bed; they were become the sentiments of Douglas, but what strength would his animated countenance have given to the expressions of the author! yet, situated as they were, he could not have spoken plainer.

CHAP.

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CHAP. XI.

THE Mackenzie family, except when John dined or supped at home, had half lived upon the expectations of what they were to indulge upon at Lord Everly's; and if they ventured to murmur at their unusual short commons, her Ladyship tartly reminded them of the expence which would attend their visit, as it was absolutely necessary to make some considerable additions to their different wardrobes, and a glass-coach was the only conveyance which could be made use of upon such an occasion. John, upon being asked, as if it were a matter of course, whether he would not accom-

pany them, mortified them excessively by telling them he should go with a friend.— However, not to make dinner wait, her Ladyship gave orders for the carriage to be at the door at a very early hour, as it was a long drive, she observed; Everly Lodge being three miles out of town, to the right of the Edgeware Road.

Owing to her great haste, they were the first guests who made their appearance, and were received by Colonel Frazer, who had not even begun his toilet, and was by no means sorry when he was relieved by Lord Everly, as the little he had seen of the new made Knight and his family had by no means prepossessed him in their favour. As for Miss Margaret, he thought her father never need be at a loss for a model to portray the malignant fiend Envy, as she is generally represented in allegorical pictures, while he contemplated the features, or more properly speaking, the expression of his daughter's countenance. Lord Everly, who
was

was an amiable, unaffected man of fashion, and derived more respectability from his good qualities than from his rank, paid his compliments with the most affable good humour to Sir Archibald and her Ladyship, congratulated them upon their son's promotion, mentioning him in the most flattering terms; then proposed, as the day was remarkably fine, a stroll in the pleasure grounds, which were very extensive, and laid out with singular taste.

Her Ladyship declared herself infinitely honoured by his polite proposal, and gave her family a look to say something to the same effect. His Lordship led them into the most pleasant paths, and pointed out his most recent improvements. Her Ladyship never found herself in better spirits; the country air always revived her; she was sure she should enjoy her health better out of the smoke of London, but she could not afford to keep two houses, and Sir Archibald's business confined him in town.

Lord

Lord Everly felt, without noticing, the hint, continuing to point out various plants and trees he presumed them unacquainted with ;—her Ladyship found fresh beauties to admire every moment, Sir Archibald was her echo ; and as his garden was the Viscount's hobby horse, he began to think she possessed some sense, and more judgment. She was (perceiving she had laid siege to his Lordship's weak side) going on in a very fine strain of panegyric, when they were joined by Miss Frazer, and in a short time by the Marquis of Beuifort and Lord Valmont. The Marquis, from his brother having travelled with John, knew the Mackenzies by sight, and favoured them with a distant bow. The Earl, though not from similar motives, did the same ; but no farther introduction took place, to her Ladyship's infinite mortification, though she rather imputed her disappointment to the almost instantaneous appearance of more company, among whom was her eldest son, when Lord Everly proposed adjourning into the

the drawing-room, where the party divided into small groups, as most suited their inclination.

The Mackenzies, un-introduced or un-acquainted with every one present, the Everly family excepted, formed a sort of distinct *partie quarrée*, as John had joined the Marquis of Beuifort and Lord Valmont, who stood leaning at the opposite corners of a large bow window that commanded a view of the road. While the Earl was discoursing with Mackenzie, the Marquis exclaimed—

“Do you expect the Dunravens, my Lord? I think this is their carriage advancing.”

“They have promised to favour us with their company, Marquis,” was the reply.

“Why, you had it in your power to make use of irresistible arguments, my Lord; my cousin of Douglas is to be here.”

“Do you suppose I mentioned that circumstance to Lord Dunraven?”

“I don’t

“ I don’t suppose it would have the same weight with him that it would with his wife.”

“ I think your Lordship ought to bear the motto of the garter in your mind,” said Miss Fraser; “ it would surely be particularly applicable in the present instance.”

“ Oh what I said was *en tout bien et toute honneur* ! Her Ladyship is by no means singular; Douglas is the rage, and I am honest enough to acknowledge, were I a woman, the exact sort of a man to turn my head.”

“ You must excuse the Marquis, Miss Fraser,” said Lord Valmont; “ he is rather splenetic at times, troubled with the green-eyed monster, which, considering we are all so eclipsed by this much-admired hero, is certainly rather excusable; though to confess our chagrin is horribly humiliating.”

“ Not more so than to find oneself wholly unnoticed when he is present,” rejoined the Marquis; “ I do think, if I did not know him to be a most capital swordsman, and a
very

very excellent marksman, I should call him out, only were he (as he most probably would) to come off conqueror, he would be ten times more sought after than ever. But here comes Lord, or more properly speaking, Lady Dunraven's carriage; for her husband is a mere cipher in her suite, whose company every one could dispense with, and whom I hope she will soon exclude from her parties."

"To oblige Mr. Douglas do you mean?" asked Lord Everly.

"Oh, believe me, I had much rather she would take such a step upon my account; if I could but exile him (no matter where) for a month, I trust I could plead my cause with effect."

Her Ladyship's appearance gave a turn to the conversation; she came prepared to annihilate Douglas by her scorn, therefore received the Marquis's compliments with unusual condescension, and appeared in excellent spirits till she discovered the man she

she was so bent upon punishing, was not in the room. To ask after him would imply what she was particularly anxious to conceal; therefore, under pretence of admiring the prospect the bow window afforded, she moved towards it, followed by the Marquis, of whom she enquired, in a low voice—

“Who are those queer mortals in that corner, and where did they spring from?”

“They are the father, mother, brother, and sister of Mackenzie, who travelled with my wife brother John, and are *protegees* of the Viscount's; their appearance is certainly rather against them, but I have heard my father say the old woman is very clever. But here comes Douglas; I began to suspect he had forgot his engagement.”

Her Ladyship's eyes sparkled, an involuntary smile proclaimed the feelings of her heart, and she drew nearer the window, in hopes of catching the first glance from this strange being she in vain endeavoured to familiarize.

familiarize. Lady Mackenzie gave her party a look, as much as to say, be prepared; while her heart fluttered, as the introduction, from which she hoped to derive such solid advantages, drew near. In a very few seconds Douglas was announced, and appeared. The ladies greeted his arrival with smiles, the gentlemen by proffered hands, and kind reproaches for his having made it so late. His attention was therefore too much engrossed at first to permit him to notice the Mackenzies, who had retreated off as he advanced; he experienced, therefore, a sort of momentary surprise. However, determined to regulate his behaviour toward them according to circumstances, but, at all events, not to seem to know them, he entered into conversation with Lord Everly respecting the Duke of Durham, secretly enjoying the dismay (he alone could account for) which was now visible upon the countenances of the family group.

The first glance of his face had robbed
them

them of all their colour; her Ladyship, never more unwilling to believe the evidence of her eyes, approached a few paces during the general compliments, to take a nearer survey of the object of her terror. Forgetful where she was, she almost started back, exclaiming, in a half whisper, "Why, Peg!"

Breathless and unable to proceed, she paused, and shrivelling up her eyes, not chusing to use her spectacles, she again fixed them upon the handsome countenance so familiar to her recollection, and so unpleasant to her view. Margaret, as unpleasantly astonished, was gazing too intently on Douglas even to notice her mother's exclamation, who, upon looking at Sir Archibald, trembled to perceive him shaking like an aspin leaf, and the big drops of perspiration standing on his forehead. Unable to stand any longer without support, and devoutly wishing she was once more in Leicester Fields, she seized hold of her daughter's arm, again stammering out—

"Why,

“Why, Peg, surely!”

She grasped so hard, Margaret replied in a sort of smothered scream—

“Ma’am!”

“Sure in God it can’t be!” continued her Ladyship.

“What, Ma’am!” enquired Margaret, in the same low voice, endeavouring to ease her arm from the pressure of her mother’s fingers, who hardly daring to utter the surmise, muttered out—

“It can’t be George Harcourt! No, ’tis impossible!” gaining more courage upon the strength of her own assertion.

“I thought there was a sort of likeness,” rejoined Margaret.

“Sort of likeness!” retorted her Ladyship, in a voice inarticulate through fear, as she now had Douglas full in view, “it must be him!” casting a ghastly look at the Knight, whose teeth began to chatter so much, that he was unable to utter a distinct sentence.

Archy

Archy had retreated into the background upon perceiving John, whose colour had heightened in proportion as their's had faded, endeavouring by his looks to convince them of the absurdity of their behaviour. Their consternation was so visible, and to the company so extraordinary, they became the objects of every one's regard ; but were infinitely too much terrified to see or hear any body except Douglas, who, feeling for John, advanced towards him, as if unmindful of his family, and addressed him with his accustomed friendship. The sound of his voice brought the heads of the Mackenzies into conjunction, while John half resolved not to introduce them to his patron after all, and felt, as Douglas hoped he would, infinitely flattered by his kind address.

Could he any way have accounted for the spectre-like looks and strange behaviour of his father and mother, he would have been comparatively at his ease ; but to see them shaking, perspiring, and whispering, to the
evident

evident astonishment of that part of the company who, unacquainted with him, were regardless of wounding his feelings, almost reduced him to a similar situation. Lady Mackenzie, taught by his looks to dread the remarks she continued to excite, turned her back upon the company; and her family having followed her example, equally conscious of the confusion they vainly strove to overcome, she said, in a whisper—

“What fules we aw are! Ye ken tis nae possible! This young mon is nephew to the Duke of Durham, and the son of a Mr. Elton; we must aw be beside oursel, though I own I never saw sitch a likeness; at first I could awmost have swore it was Harcourt.”

“I am sure so could I, Ma’am,” replied Margaret; “but you know it is nothing uncommon for one person to be taken for another.”

The Knight listened in silence, but could not, like them, subscribe to the impossibility
of

of its being the much-feared Harcourt, therefore shook his head in token of the doubts he still entertained; and Archy ventured to affirm that Mr. Douglas was Harcourt, if ever he had seen the latter.

“Haud your fulish tongue, boy!” cried my Lady.

At that moment, unprepared as they were, John having received a hint from Lord Everly, said, sufficiently loud to induce them to turn round—

“May I entreat, Mr. Douglas, you would allow me to have the honour of introducing to you my father and mother, who have long known, and most sensibly felt the numerous obligations you have conferred upon their son.”

Sorely against their will did the Knight and my Lady turn towards the speaker, like young recruits learning their exercise,

who generally present a sort of profile when they mean to look forwards.

“ Sir Archibald,” said John, in an impressive tone, “ Mr. Douglas, whose name you have such reason to revere !”

The Knight, to avoid raising his eyes, stood upon the bend the whole time his son was speaking, but lowered his head rather more as he concluded. Obligated, however, to resume his upright posture, he unavoidably caught a glance of Douglas’s countenance, which reminded him so strongly of not only his ill-treated ward, but that ward’s father and mother, he found it impossible to utter a word. His lips moved, but merely produced a sort of inarticulate sound ; the cold dew once more stood upon his forehead, though he had made use of his pocket handkerchief but the moment before he faced about. He cast a lamentable look at his better half, wishing her to speak for him, knowing she was much more expert at paying

compliments than himself, admitting the tremor he laboured under had not deprived him of the power of utterance. But Lady Mackenzie, notwithstanding all the fine speeches she had composed upon this important occasion, had nothing *a-propos* to their present situation.

John with difficulty kept his temper; distressed beyond measure as he was at his father's behaviour, and finding it in vain to wait till he recovered his speech, he turned to his mother, to whom he repeated nearly what he had said to the Knight. But though she had, or rather endeavoured to persuade herself and family they were all mistaken, and that the elegant, fashionable Douglas who stood before her could not be the vagabond Harcourt, her faith and courage totally forsook her at the moment she stood most in need, at least, of the latter. She gave a hem, stammered out something no one besides herself could comprehend, and tried, by the profundity of her curtsy, to
atone

atone for her deficiency of language. Had John given way to his feelings, he would indubitably have requested some sort of explanation of their fearful pallid looks, vain attempts to articulate, and increased terror, rendered indeed almost necessary to the company in general, who were silent spectators of this strange introduction.

Douglas felt himself so amply revenged for all their former treatment, that had he not been withheld by prudential motives, he would have taken them by the hand, laughed over his recent visit, and acknowledged himself the child left under their care. As it was, he affected neither to observe their fright nor confusion, and though he several times felt an inclination to laugh at the various ridiculous ideas which came across his mind, he even suppressed his smiles, and retreated among the company, after a polite bow, on finding Mackenzie was not at all inclined to extend the ceremony of introduction to Archy and Margaret.

Lady Dunraven's eyes had followed Douglas, whom she was astonished to see introduced to the *queer mortals* who had attracted her notice upon her first entrance. She seized the moment of his return among the company to make him a sign to approach, and when near enough, said in a low voice—

“What have you done to those Caledonians, Douglas? they seem even now at their last gasp. But a few minutes since I thought all our smelling bottles would be required to prevent them from giving up the ghost!”

“Upon my word I am unable to satisfy your Ladyship.”

“How ridiculous you are! You must know what ails them; how can you delight in perplexing me?”

“But why attribute their frightened looks to me, Lady Dunraven?”

“Because your approach robbed them of their colour, deprived them of their speech,
and

and gave them that ague they are still shaking with !”

“ Then all these terrible symptoms must be owing to their being introduced to such a consequential personage as my sweet self ! *My name* certainly petrified them with awe and reverence ; sounds have different effects upon different persons, your Ladyship must know.”

“ Oh they can’t be such fools ! you are only laughing at me.”

The Marquis, who had hitherto remained a silent auditor of their conversation, now said—

“ He has cast a spell upon them, Lady Dunraven ; I have heard many people say there is an irresistible fascination about him, and their remarks are fully exemplified in the present instance.”

“ Do you mean to insinuate Mr. Douglas possesses the powers of a basilisk, Marquis ?”

Douglas smiled, and leaving her Ladyship and the Marquis to debate the point, fauntered towards Lord Valmont, who still remained near the window. As they were in the hearing of the Mackenzies, they discoursed upon indifferent subjects; while John, who never before had felt so great a propensity to quarrel with his family, seized what he conceived to be a favourable opportunity to vent his spleen, by enquiring, in a low, but furious tone—

“What the devil is the matter with you to-day? Are you mad, or bereft of your senses?”

They endeavoured, by their woeful countenances, to implore his pity and forgiveness before they attempted to speak; when, to their infinite joy, the appearance of the butler to announce dinner, gave them at least a short reprieve.

Little

Little of moment occurred during the repast; but the Mackenzies, notwithstanding they had lived for several days upon the bare expectations of this treat, found it impossible (owing to their recent fright, and still having the object of their terror in view) to do honour to a most elegant dinner, which was not one of their least mortifications. The Knight and Archy tried to raise their spirits by repeated bumpers of wine every opportunity that offered; but these exhilarating and unusual draughts failed of the desired effect, as even the ghost of his deceased friend would scarcely have disturbed the Knight more than the presence of this living image (admitting it was no more) of his son.

When the ladies left the gentlemen to drink their healths if they chose it, Lady Mackenzie had an opportunity of once more expressing her surprise to her beloved Margaret, as Lady Dunraven never once addressed either mother or daughter, and took

care to keep Miss Frazer in discourse, to prevent her from noticing them. Margaret perfectly coincided with her mother respecting the resemblance; but as for its being Harcourt, that was impossible! Indeed she thought, upon a scrutiny, Mr. Douglas was much handsomer than the fellow he reminded them of. Her Ladyship was of the same opinion, and as to their being one and the same person, she only wondered how such an idea could have occurred to her in particular; and, in fact, admitting for a moment so great an improbability, what had they to fear from Harcourt?

“What indeed!” rejoined Margaret; “besides, Mr. Douglas is much fairer, and has not near so much colour.”

While they were thus reasoning upon probabilities and possibilities, Douglas was longing to make the Knight and Archy tipsey; but knowing Lord Everly to be remarkably sober, in common with the rest of

of the company, he made an early motion to join the ladies. During tea, as it began to grow dark, Lady Dunraven asked Lord Everly if there were not frequent robberies between his house and London?

“He had not heard of any lately,” he replied; “but if her Ladyship entertained any apprehensions, he should be very happy to accommodate her and Lord Dunraven with a bed?”

“Your Lordship is particularly obliging; but I have an engagement I can’t dispense with myself from fulfilling, which forces me to decline your considerate offer, which has by no means removed my fears; I mean therefore to entreat some of these gentlemen who came alone, to return with my Lord and me. You, Mr. Douglas, for instance; your open carriage will not be very agreeable in the dark.”

“Your Ladyship does me infinite honour,” replied Douglas, “and I should feel myself very happy in being appointed to act

under Lord Dunraven as your guard ; but I do not mean to return to town this evening."

Lady Dunraven's disappointment was not quite so apparent as the Mackenzies' terror, as she took peculiar pains to conceal it.— Could she with any propriety, after what she had said, have accepted Lord Everly's offer, she would not have hesitated a moment ; but that Nobleman did not repeat it, apprehending Douglas, who had merely conditionally promised to sleep at the Lodge when he invited him, rather wished to avoid her society ; and sensible of the propriety of the motive, he was very little inclined to afford her an opportunity to coquet with him. The Marquis, who internally enjoyed her mortification, now requested she would accept him in Douglas's place as her *pis aller* : he expected no farther favour.

" She did not feel inclined to lay so heavy a tax upon his gallantry," was the reply, and

and the Marquis was too well *au fait* of the present fashion to press his offer.

Douglas had turned from the Lady towards John Mackenzie. Had not Lady Isabella Kinross been ever uppermost in his mind, it is possible he might have been more inclined to humour this capricious beauty; but the Scotch lass effectually steeled his breast against her fascinating blandishments. John, who dreaded the behaviour of his family should have lowered him in his patron's esteem, was truly rejoiced to find himself addressed as usual, and requested to make himself visible oftener than he had lately done at Durham House. So public an invitation raised Mackenzie's spirits, which had been to the full as much depressed as his father's, though from very different motives;—he promised to avail himself of his condescension, and even felt happy in the humiliating reflection, that his family, notwithstanding their recent honours, were

of too little consequence to excite even the anger of such a man.

Lord and Lady Dunraven were the first to take their leave, as her Ladyship's fears vanished from the moment they ceased to interest Douglas in her favour, who, anxious to prevent the Marquis from having an opportunity to give way to his *penchant* for raillery, retired into an adjoining apartment with Lord Valmont, under pretence of having something to communicate to that Nobleman, to whom he honestly confessed his motives for making such a request. During their absence, the Marquis asked Miss Frazer if she did not think his cousin a most insensible mortal? A man who might, if he chose, be *bien avec toutes les femmes, mal avec les maris!* To let so favourable an opportunity escape him ought to be deemed unpardonable."

"You are rather unintelligible, Marquis," was the reply, "though I positively think both our sex and your's take uncommon pains

pains to render one of the most amiable men in the world insupportable."

" *One of the most amiable men in the world!* Now is not that complimenting the object of my envy at the expence of all your male acquaintance, Miss Frazer?"

" I believe I speak the general opinion of the world, Marquis; I neither think your cousin divine, irresistible, or free from foibles, as some ladies are inclined to do. I think him remarkably handsome, very well educated, and infinitely pleasing both in his conversation and manners; and I have no doubt but he is a very valuable friend, though I think he often degenerates into a frivolous man of fashion."

" I am happy to find you don't think him one of those 'faultless monsters the world ne'er saw,' rejoined the Marquis; " what is your opinion, Lord Everly?"

" That it is a thousand pities such judgment, superior understanding, and unequalled talents should be thrown away upon a man of his fashion, future rank, and expectations

pectations—circumstances alone sufficient to make him respected. The world, ever indulgent, would have given him credit for all those qualities that would have rendered the successor of Mark Elton a very superior character, an honour to his country, and perhaps the world! What the Duke of Durham will be, I can't pretend to prognosticate. Mr. Douglas is elegant in his person, expensive in his ideas, and generous to a degree, bordering on prodigality; an adept in the fashionable scenes of drinking and gaming, and means, I am told, to become a candidate for public fame in the glorious annals of the turf! Of what use therefore is good, or even common sense, and a remarkably well-cultivated mind to such a man? Or shall we say, when considering the lights and shades of his varied character, "Alas! poor human nature!"

"What a philippic upon modern manners, my Lord!" cried the Marquis; "however, for o e, Douglas I am sure would, notwithstanding your critique, subscribe to
the

the justness of your remarks as readily as I do, and here he comes to answer for himself; therefore, in hopes of being the better for your lesson, I will take my leave while it is fresh in my memory."

Bowing around, he made his exit, and the rest of the company followed his example, Lord Valmont, Douglas, and another friend of the Colonel's excepted.

CHAP. XII.

THE Mackenzies, owing to their fear of appearing to be in haste, had remained till the last; indeed they had another still more powerful reason for prolonging their visit, unproductive as it had proved of pleasure to any of them—the dread of being alone with John, who was to return with them. However, having expended so large a stock of compliments in the morning, her Ladyship took leave almost in total silence; her family did the same, happy to escape from the presence of the man they had hoped to make their

their staunch friend. They had scarcely drove from the door, before John, in a much louder key than he had addressed them in the saloon, exclaimed—

“ What the devil has possessed you all day! By Heavens, I hardly know which of you behaved the worst; you in particular, Ma’am, who in general talk enough for half a dozen, to stutter and stammer, and hesitate when you attempted to address my patron, while you shook as if under the influence of a paralytic stroke! Z—ds, the very reflection is enough to drive me mad!”

“ Johnny, Johnny, nae give way to passion in sitch a manner! Ainly think of mentioning the devil before Heaven; ye ken I cannae bear ony thing profane!”

“ I was not talking about religion, Ma’am. However, I can only say, I never was so completely mortified in the whole course of my life, and I could almost put a pistol to my head for having afforded
you

you such an opportunity of exposing both yourselves and me to the ridicule of the whole company! I have laid myself under the greatest obligations to Lord Everly to get you invited to this dinner, that you might have it in your power to express your gratitude to Mr. Douglas, which I must acknowledge you did in a very polite way. He must have formed a very high opinion of your complimentary talents, Ma'am."

"Johnny, nae run on in sitch a manner, I desire, about what ye cannae comprehend; have a little patience till ye are calm, and can listen to reason."

"Do, pray give me some reason, Ma'am," interrupted John, "why you can speak so much more intelligibly now than you could a few hours ago, when the devil himself could not have understood your unintelligible jargon; and why you seemed in such an agony of terror when forced to raise your eyes upon one of the most elegant young men in England? Did you ever see Mr. Douglas before? and are any of you
conscious

conscious (your ghastly looks fully warrant my suspicion) of having offended him beyond forgiveness? for, faith! I am tempted (and no doubt every one present is equally so inclined) to think he has it in his power to inflict the most exemplary punishment upon you. I have not been able to look him or any one else in the face the whole day, nor shall I for a month to come. I dare say in future whenever either of your names are mentioned, it will be with the glorious addition of the terrified Knight or his quaking Lady."

Too much provoked to listen longer in silence, Sir Archibald and my Lady, whose eyes had met several times, broke forth at the same moment, protesting they would not put up with such unprovoked ill usage.

"Unprovoked!" repeated John, very drily, "then perhaps you would assert you acted as reasonable and polite people ought to have done? However, as nothing would afford

afford me greater pleasure than your being able to clear your conduct to my satisfaction, I wish you would make what I am afraid will only prove an endeavour to illustrate, while the recent events are so fresh in my memory."

The Knight, far more courageous than when facing the (in his opinion) tremendous Douglas, raised himself upon his seat, and in a furly, meant to be an authoritative tone, said—

"Son John, I did not know you had any right to call me, or any of your family to an account, as you seem to suppose. If I have hitherto remained silent, it was only——"

"My dear," interrupted her Ladyship, "haud yere tongue aboot reeght and wrong; nae let us quarrel without coming to the point; there is nae a better tempered young mon in the world than our Johnny, and there is reason on his side as well as on our's.

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He is rather passionate, I mun allow, and rather fractious when he has taken a cheerful glass or so."

"I may be downright tipsy, Ma'am, for any thing I know to the contrary, as I certainly drank much more wine than usual by way of keeping up my spirits; but this is foreign to our subject—only be so kind as to inform me what made you tremble before Mr. Douglas, and I shall be perfectly satisfied? I will then, if I am troublesome, get out of the carriage, and walk home."

"Ainly give us time, Johnny, and we will account for our agitation, which was merely owing to the strong resemblance yere noble friend bore to one of our's that is dead and gone, and to a sorry loon of a son he has left to starve."

"I never saw so astonishing a likeness!" exclaimed Sir Archibald.

"Nor I," cried Archy and Margaret, speaking at once.

"What does all this mean?" impatiently enquired John; "I am still terribly at a loss;
pray

pray be rather more explicit. Have you, by any direct or indirect means, wronged this deceased friend Mr. Douglas reminded you of so strongly, and did you suppose he was returned to life in his shape to call you to account?"

"Johnny, Johnny, ye are very provoking and scurrilous to-night! Allow yere father and me, who have most reeght to question ye, to enquire when and how ye first became acquainted with this young mon?"

"What d—d nonsense, when I wrote you word, and have told you fifty times since my return, humanity induced him and his grandfather to seek me out at Lausanne."

"Where he bore the name of Elton, ye said, I think?"

"Did you ever know or see him before while distinguished by that, or any other appellation—else pray to what do all these absurd questions tend?"

Sir

Sir Archibald, who had fallen back in his corner, and had sat with his arms folded for a minute or more, gave a kind of start, and unthinkingly muttered to himself—

“ ’Tis very strange, yet it must be impossible!—No, it certainly can’t be him!”

John, who was seated opposite, and who had listened with increased astonishment, and no small degree of perturbation to his grumbling speech, vehemently exclaimed—

“ Z——ds and d—mn it, who can’t it be, Sir Archibald?”

“ George Harcourt!” they all exclaimed at the same moment, so fearful were they to oblige John to repeat his question, lest he should stamp the bottom of the coach out.

The name struck John very forcibly, and in an accent something similar to his father’s, he repeated Harcourt twice, while endeavouring to recollect whom the Knight alluded to;

to; then said, with his accustomed *sang froid*—

“Do you mean a youth of that name once under your care, Sir, and whom you brought from Rome?”

“The same,” replied the Knight; “and Mr. Douglas is so like him, I could almost have sworn, when he entered Lord Everly’s saloon, he was that young fellow, though a moment’s reflection convinced me of the impossibility of my surmise.”

“I should have supposed so,” rejoined John. “My mother’s story accounted rather more rationally for your ghastly countenances and shaking limbs: she gave me to understand that Mr. Douglas reminded you of a deceased friend! Now a ghost is a terrifying object; but you were alarmed at his resemblance to the poor young fellow you all but kicked into the street in the year 17—. Our departed Mary wrote me an account of the transaction, which did you so much honour, and reflected such credit upon your humanity!

nity! I no longer wonder, since Mr. Douglas brought that event to your mind, you were unable to address him, or to conceal your apprehension; for either the father's ghost, or the son, *in propria persona*, were sufficient to appal more courageous minds than seem to have fallen to your share; else I should have supposed, much as you doubtless have to answer for upon poor Harcourt's account, you need not have dreaded, as you evidently did, nay do still, that the Hon. Mr. Douglas and he were the same person; and I think you ought to have been convinced that gentleman never saw any of you before to-day."

"Son John," rejoined the Knight, though sorely galled by his home reproaches, "I did my duty by Harcourt; your sister Mary was wrapped up in the sorry fellow, but I was not obliged to regulate my conduct by her wishes. I trust I fear no man; but, as your mother observed, Mr. Douglas's likeness to that boy's father astonished, nay perhaps alarmed us all; it was so very

unaccountable, as certainly (indeed I know he descended from a very different clan) he could not be at all related to the Durham family."

" 'Tis amazing these wise reflections did not occur sooner, Sir Archibald, as I leave you to judge what conclusions the company or Mr. Douglas would have formed, had you acknowledged to them, or him, as you have to me, that your agonies of terror proceeded from the strong resemblance he bore to a ward of your's? Now would it not have been very natural, and not at all uncharitable, to have supposed you had embezzled his property, if not made away with him for some such sinister purpose? And since we are upon the subject, what is become of that unfortunate young fellow?"

" Ye ken about as much as we do; he may be in England for ony thing we ken to the contrary; he paid us a visit last December."

" Indeed!" interrupted John.

" As

“ As true as ye sit there, my bairn, and a greater vagabond does not exist.”

“ Then I am amazed such a resemblance should exist between him and one of the handsomest, most elegant young men I ever saw ! But pray what does this Harcourt do ? or rather how does he live ?”

“ That is more than we can tell ye, Johnny ; aw we ken of the loon is, that he came to see us in a very shabby plight, expecting Sir Archibald was to feed and clothe him ; but he soon discovered his mistake, trudged away as he came, and we have nae set eyes on the varlet fin.”

“ And you really did not relieve the poor fellow’s wants ?” said John, looking at his father and mother.

“ No truly, son,” replied the Knight ;

“ I know what it is to work for my bread, and know better how to dispose of my money than in encouraging laziness. Had Harcourt listened to the excellent advice I gave him, he would not have been in want ; but he is both obstinate and proud, and ’tis

fitting he should suffer for his folly!" repeating the heads of what had passed during George's last visit.

John listened with silent indignation, and when the Knight ceased speaking, exclaimed—

"For shame, for shame, Sir Archibald! Was it thus you received the son of your best friend? Had I been as unfortunate as this poor youth in time of need, I should not have been here to condemn your ingratitude; for I shall ever think, and make no scruple to say, you were at least bound to provide for his immediate wants, and to endeavour to put him in some way to get his bread. I dare say he did not suppose you were bound to maintain him in idleness; and to whom but you could he apply, friendless as he must be in England? and could you, knowing him to be thus absolutely destitute, treat him as you say? It was abominable, nay inhuman!"

The

The Knight and his Lady once more interrupted him, and warmly defended their conduct, accusing their eldest daughter of having wrote many falsities concerning Harcourt.

John retorted in a higher tone—"Mary was incapable of uttering, much more of writing an untruth; and Sir Archibald being under such obligations to Mr. Harcourt, senior, that, admitting his son was the very character he described, it was not less his duty to contribute towards his support."

The dispute now became very serious between the father and son—indeed they were all talkers. John swore Harcourt had been scandalously treated in Paris, and still more so in England; the Knight vowed he would not put up with such language nor such treatment even from the great Mr. Douglas, much less from one of his own children! My Lady endeavoured to soften matters, gently hinting that the coachman and footboy

would conclude they were fighting. This remark had the desired effect, and John said, very calmly—

“It was useless to argue any longer upon their want of feeling; their behaviour to Mr. Douglas was a convincing proof they verified the old proverb, ‘a guilty conscience needs no accuser;’ and he would, as a sort of retribution for having met with such good friends himself, seek out Harcourt, and endeavour to alleviate his distress.”

“Play the fule if ye like, Johnny,” cried her Ladyship; “fling yere money away how ye please; I did nae ken ye had sae much to spare, but ye might look at home first, and provide for yere brother before ye are in fitch haste to relieve sturdy beggars!”

“I entreat, Ma’am, that you would spare yourself the trouble of dictating what I ought or ought not to do. I don’t pretend to boast of my riches, though, thank God and my generous friends, I have a few pounds by me, which I don’t think I could employ better

better than by bestowing them upon poor Harcourt, as I by no means look upon myself bound to provide for my brother, admitting I had it in my power. Let me advise you to take that task upon yourselves;—you must have laid by some money, I should presume; indeed I have heard my father boast of his accumulations, though he seems so little inclined to relieve the wants of the poor and needy.”

“ Only endeavour to do your own duty, son, as strictly as I have performed mine, and you will be as indifferent about the censure or applause of your children as I am.”

“ Weel, weel, Sir Archibald, let us have nae mair words about the sorry fellow; Johnny is nae aware of aw the provocation he gave us, and ye ought to make allowances for the prejudices he has imbibed from Mary’s letter; and I am truly happy to reflect our filly confusion did nae prevent Mr. Douglas from treating ye with the greatest politeness. Cultivate his acquaintance, my bairn, and gently hint our gratitude over-

powered us; that will account for our flurry very satisfactorily. Lord Everly seemed to say he is rather profuse—at his age, ye ken, 'tis a virtue; but sin ye are fitch a favourite, could nae ye take advantage of one of his excesses, when he is treating ye and his friends, to inform him Archy was bred to the law, and would do honour to his recommendation? Half a word well-turned, when the juice of the grape has opened his heart, may induce him to give ye a promise he will stand bound in honour to fulfil.”

“How eloquent you can be in a good cause, Ma'am, and how generously do you enforce the lesson you have so frequently repeated to me—*‘endeavour to turn every one's foibles to your own advantage!’*—a most noble precept, and does infinite honour to your prudence, if not to your principles! However, I never knew Mr. Douglas drink to excess, though he possibly may be fond of jovial parties; but as I shall never be at these convivial tavern meetings, I am afraid I shall not be able to practise upon his credulity in favour of Archibald.”

“Ye

“Ye quite mistake me, Johnny, when ye fancy I meant to criticize yere noble patron ; fitch men are privileged persons. But really Archy is a great expence to us, and a small income ought to provide for aw his wants ; yet, if he did nae take care of his bread when it was, as ye may say, put into his mouth, I would turn him out of doors with as little remorse as I did George Harcourt, and leave him to shift for himsel ; so, ye see, I would act by my own with as much rigour as by other folks’ children.”

“That I know was also one of your principles, Ma’am ; I am no judge of Archibald’s merit, but were I convinced he equalled Mr. Douglas in point of real knowledge, shining talents, and brilliant accomplishments, it would very ill become me to mention him to that gentleman. Could I indirectly induce him to notice your unfortunate ward, I really would endeavour to place him under his protection, as I know he is a good scholar ; and your fright has

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convinced

convinced me he must be a very fine figure. But this is merely talking for talking sake."

"Indeed I hope so," rejoined the Knight; "and mind, I forbid you, as you value my blessing, to have any thing to say to that black-guard Harcourt, should he ever fall in your way, much less to seek him out, and talk of recommending him to Mr. Douglas."

"I don't conceive myself at all obliged to see with your eyes, hear with your ears, or to adopt your prejudices and opinions, Sir Archibald. I am at an age to judge for myself, and to act according to my own principles. You owe your celebrity, livelihood while at Rome, and present fortune, wholly to Harcourt's father; facts are stubborn things, and I defy you to contradict my assertion. He left his only child under your care, and you gratefully left him to be educated by the charity of a benevolent stranger; refused to exert the little interest you possessed, towards his establishment in life; and, finally, because owing to your desertion, he spent his little fortune in vainly endeavouring

endeavouring, no doubt, to increase it.—
You kindly turned him, when wretched and
in want, out of your doors, to starve in the
street, or to put a period to his miserable
existence. Do you conceive such conduct
calculated to call down blessings either upon
your own, or your children's heads? If I
am to repress the common feelings of huma-
nity to obtain your benediction, I am afraid
you will never think me deserving of it.”

Their arrival in London put a stop to
their wrangle, and John, heartily tired of
the subject, stopped the carriage at the first
stand of hackney coaches, telling them he
must call at his office before he went home.
Lady Mackenzie, heartily sorry the dispute
had gone such lengths, and anxious to make
matters up, again requested they might set
him down—they should not pay the more;
the fellow and his horses had had a very easy
day of it, and where was the use of spending his
money in coach hire? But no arguments which
either she or the Knight made use of, could
induce

induce John to accede to their considerate proposal. So, wishing them a good evening, as he presumed they would have retired before he reached home, he parted from them, not to go to his office, but to reflect upon the events of the day ; and was so much hurt by his parents' conduct toward Harcourt, he determined to take a lodging the very next day, to avoid any future altercation upon that subject.

CHAP. XIII.

EARLY the next morning Douglas returned to town, and amused the Duke of Durham with an account of his unexpected meeting with his friendly guardian. There were few, if any people, so much the object of the Duke's aversion; it may therefore be supposed how much he enjoyed the recapitulation of the scene at the Lodge. John Mackenzie he thought truly deserving his nephew's esteem; and highly approved of his not comprising him in the enmity he had vowed to his family, as he was certainly not to blame for their unprincipled conduct.

After

After listening to his various just animadversions upon the Knight and his better half's behaviour, which, like their son, he did not scruple to place to the account of conscious guilt, Douglas left him to ruminate over the scene, and hastened to Sir Charles Creighton's, equally anxious to inform him how amply he had been revenged for the past injuries the Knight had conferred. The Baronet was still more diverted than the Duke, and only wished Douglas would allow him to call them to a reckoning as the confidential friend of their late ward; he should glory in putting them into such another confounded fright, if it went no further; but Douglas's real regard for John Mackenzie, and the respect he bore the memory of his excellent sister, had long since determined him to suppose their parents had acted honestly, though not kindly by him—of course he negatived the Baronet's kind offer, and asked him, as the morning was very fine, to walk back with him into St. James's Square.

Sir

Sir Charles readily agreed, and being in no haste, they purposed to go round through the Green Park. Neptune, who always accompanied his master when he rode or walked, except when he was going to pay ceremonious visits, was of the party, and sometimes preceded, at others followed them, to the top of Piccadilly ; but was behind at the moment they crossed to the Park, and by that means lost sight of his master, and when he reached the gate leading into Hyde Park, was at a loss which way to take.— Douglas and the Baronet waited on the opposite side to watch his motions ; he took a hasty turn within the great park, but finding himself disappointed, was hastening back again, when his master's well-known whistle increased his speed so much in coming out of the small gate, that finding his progress impeded by the throng resorting to take the air, it being a holiday, he made an attempt to pass under a stall set out with apples, gingerbread, &c. standing to the left under the wall ; but unconscious of his size, and
not

not finding himself inclined to creep, he brought the ambulating shop upon his back for some yards, and at last, to the infinite diversion of a very large concourse of people, discharged his burthen in the middle of the street, in his haste to join his master.

The mistress of the stall rent the air with her screams; and was undecided whether to pursue the culprit, whom she still had in sight, or to endeavour to save her wares from the depredations of the surrounding multitude. Sir Charles and Douglas joined heartily in the general shouts of mirth, and Neptune, as if conscious he had diverted them, capered about in high glee, while the apple woman abused both him and his master in the *broad dialect of Broad St. Giles's*, till Douglas, having recovered his gravity, enquired into the damage his dog had done.

“She had lost two guineas by the job, the very least farthing.”

“Not

“Not more than half a one,” vociferated the bye-standers! But Douglas, ever generous, instantly complied with her demands, and was turning away, when, owing to the day, a great number of boys were assembled, who swearing the old devil was doubly and trebly paid, once more overset the stall, which had been replaced, as well as some of the articles it contained, and a general scramble ensued. The old woman’s ravings were drowned in the continual shouts of the young fry; she therefore thought fit to give up the contest, very happy to think she had made such an excellent day’s work, and Neptune well fed with gingerbread, as having been the ultimate occasion of the treat, followed his master, who vowed the scene was well worth the money it had cost.

They continued to laugh over the adventure as they proceeded down Constitution Hill, when Neptune, being so full of his gambols, ran against two gentlemen just before them.

“I

“ I must positively make excuses this time for the impolite beast” said Douglas.

“ They are Emigrants,” observed Sir Charles.

“ Then most likely are men of consequence,” rejoined Douglas.

As they were now very near, he heard one of them say in French—

“ He is certainly rather impolite, but he is very handsome, and seems to belong to a good master; I wish many of our poor countrymen now in the empire were as well off.”

“ So do I with all my soul,” cried Douglas, recognizing in the speaker the Count de St. Mars, who turned hastily round, exclaiming, after a moment’s scrutiny—

“ How rejoiced I am to see you, my beloved pupil !”

“ You do me infinite honour, Count; I feared you were in Germany; need I add some dire necessity forced you to leave France? How truly happy I feel you have
fought

sought an asylum in Great Britain ! When did you arrive ? Why have not I seen you at Durham House ?”

“ I landed upon this hospitable shore about a fortnight ago, and should certainly, had I known your present residence, have waited upon you the moment I reached London ; but our joint friend, the excellent Principal, though he wrote me a very interesting narrative of every thing that had befallen you since you left Martinico, to your being the acknowledged heir to a Dukedom, did not inform me where I should be able to offer you my congratulations upon the last mentioned event ; and my mind has been so fully occupied by my own and other people’s affairs, that it never occurred to me any Londoner could have directed me to your uncle’s residence, from whose servants I might have learnt. But have you heard from the Principal lately ?”

“ I have seen him very lately, Count, and hope by this time he is safely arrived at
Bologna,

Bologna, where (I suppose you know) he meant to bend his steps."

He then proceeded to give him an exact account of what had passed between himself and the Principal, mentioning the effects he had brought to England, and entreating he would accompany him immediately to Durham House, that he might deliver up his trust.

The Count smiled at his earnestness, and without making any direct reply, begged leave to introduce his pupil to his companion, the *ci-devant* Bishop of ———. Douglas paid his compliments, with even more than politeness, to the venerable prelate, and presented Sir Charles Creighton to both gentlemen as his most intimate friend, telling the Count he was also an *eleve* of the Principal's, and then warmly repeated his former invitation to Durham House, which he extended to the Bishop.

" You

“ You are very kind, my young friend, but I must beg leave at present to decline being presented to your uncle ; it would ill become my circumstances to associate with the rich and powerful ; every one ought more or less to conform to their situation, and I have neither reason nor right to complain of mine. In Germany I experienced many embarrassments ; but as they did not absolutely originate in want of money, I have enjoyed many luxuries since my arrival in London. For example, I have a good room and a good bed at an hotel in Leicester Square, and enjoy the society of a vast number of fellow Emigrants, who are inhabitants of the same house, some of whom rave incessantly at their destiny, while others laugh at their misfortunes. One prefers the attic, another the ground floor, according to their dispositions, or dread of being either stifled or burnt. We all dine at a *table d'Hote*, where we talk politics, quarrel, and make it up again, Frenchman like ; altogether, I am much happier than I ever conceived I should

should have been out of France; and this unexpected meeting with you has put me into high spirits."

Douglas was rejoiced to find him so gay, but alledged so many reasons why he ought to permit him to introduce him to the Duke of Durham, that he overcame all his scruples, and made him promise to call in St. James's Square the following morning, as neither gentlemen would wait upon his Grace in their present *dishabille*.

While they were debating the point, one of the Ministers, with whom the Duke was in habits of intimacy, passed them on horse-back; and ever sedulous, like most great men, to pay his court to the rising sun, he addressed Douglas upon the news of the day, the weather, and such frivolous topics, while he glanced his eyes over his companions, who had retreated to some distance, not to interrupt their conversation.

"Is

“ Is not that the late Governor of the Military School, Mr. Douglas ?” he enquired.

“ The same, Sir,” was the reply.

“ I wish you could make it convenient to look in upon me during the course of the day, or to-morrow ; I wish to have a little conversation with you about that gentleman, as we are going to incorporate several bodies of his countrymen, and he would most likely be able to give us some useful information upon the subject.”

Douglas promised to wait upon him in the evening, upon which he took leave, and rode off, while Douglas rejoined his friends. Not chusing to mention what had passed respecting the Count between him and the Minister, he turned the discourse upon the late Revolution, which had driven them from France ; and told the Count he should take an early opportunity of presenting him to his ward, who was in habits of correspondence with Madame de Fierval, and would be particularly

larly happy to see a countryman. They soon reached Leicester Square; Douglas took a glance towards the Mackenzies' house, but did not mention them to the Count, unwilling to expose them to his censure, and having very little to say in their praise.

Having listened with the most friendly sympathy to a detail of that gentleman's adventures since his departure from France, and made him renew his promise to breakfast at Durham House the following day, Sir Charles and he took their leaves of this still gay, though unfortunate Nobleman, who served them for conversation till they reached St. James's Square. The Duke was very happy to hear his nephew had thus opportunely met one of his former friends, and only wished he knew how he could mitigate the rigour of his unmerited exile.

Douglas mentioned what had passed between him and the Minister; and as being
4 employed

employed in making the attempt to restore his former honours and fortune, the Duke was convinced would afford such a man the greatest satisfaction, he wrote an urgent letter in his behalf to the gentleman Douglas had engaged to visit in the evening, and hinted the propriety of granting a pension to the brave veteran, in addition to the command of one of the Emigrant corps.

At the appointed time, leaving the Baronet to amuse his uncle, Douglas set out for the Minister's; even Lady Isabella Kinross was forgotten in his anxiety to serve his former kind benefactor, in whose praise, it may be supposed, he was particularly eloquent, and spoke so well, and so much to the purpose, he was requested to bring his friend to sup at the Minister's the following Monday; and, assured that the Count's advancement, and future fortune, were become a national concern, he retired, far more pleased than when he learned he was heir to the Durham title and estates.

The Count was exact to his appointment. He came alone, as the Bishop knew he had many matters of importance to discuss with his pupil, who, after delivering up every thing the Principal had entrusted him with, introduced him to the Duke, who was waiting breakfast for them in the library, and gave the Count not only a polite, but a most friendly, familiar welcome, and earnestly entreated he would often repeat his visits, thanking him, in the most grateful terms, for the past favours he had conferred upon his nephew, and declaring it was their joint wish, as well as duty, to make England as agreeable to him as possible, while the present anarchy prevailed in France.

He then (as Douglas rather wished the information should come from the Duke) proceeded to inform him that the Minister who had accosted his nephew in the Park, soon after that meeting, had earnestly requested the Count would favour him with his company the ensuing Monday, repeating why
h

he wished to see him, in a manner most likely to flatter the amiable Emigrant, and finally informing him his nephew had ventured to promise he would accede to the invitation.

The Count, who looked as he felt, pleased to find himself still of consequence, and likely to have it in his power to serve his countrymen, readily agreed to accompany Douglas, though he protested he should never accustom himself to English dinner or supper hours—they were so much out of reason; however, he should hold himself in readiness to attend his young friend at his own time, and went home convinced of that important truth—"That good actions ever meet their reward, even in this world!"

CHAP. XIV.

NOTHING material occurred during the remainder of the week. Lady Isabella Kinross was spending the holidays at a friend's of her grandmother's; of course Douglas was in no haste to introduce the Count at Mrs. Shenstone's, though he saw him every day. He was engaged on the Monday to dine at the Duke of Northington's; and as the party, being a formal one, broke up rather early, he readily agreed to accompany the Marquis of Beaufort to Ranelagh for an hour, before he called for the Count.

Talking

Talking about that gentleman and the Minister, the conversation insensibly reverted to John Mackenzie ; and the Marquis declared he had been tempted to ask him, during a short visit he paid his father, whether his family had survived the dreadful shock they underwent at Lord Everly's on that day week ?

Douglas laughed at the notion, adding that their absurdities could merely be attributed to their ignorance, which certainly accorded very ill with their title. He had seen John twice since the terrible discomfiture of his family, and was not sorry to find he had left Leicester Square, and now lodged in Bury Street, St. James's. From his behaviour he was convinced neither the Knight nor his Lady had any idea he had ever borne the name of Harcourt ; he therefore longed very much to know how they accounted to their son for their terror, but could not ask the question, and found, from what Lord Beuifort said, he was as ignorant as himself,

though he had thought it very probable John might have been more communicative to the Duke of Northington and him, than he would have chosen to be at Durham House.

They had sauntered twice round the Rotunda, when they met Sir Charles Creighton and Colonel Fraser; and after another turn, they sat down at one of the open tables to drink their tea. While they were criticizing, or praising the passing groups, two gentlemen, so much in liquor that they were rather reeling than walking towards them, attracted their's, nay, indeed, general attention.

“By their boisterous mirth and rude behaviour, those two fellows will soon get kicked out, I am of opinion,” said Sir Charles, “if they do not mend their manner.”

“Why surely the bluff-faced one is Archy Mackenzie!” said the Colonel.

“Even

"Even so, I do believe," rejoined Douglas.

"What, John Mackenzie's brother?" asked the Baronet.

"The same, in all his drunken glory," replied the Colonel.

"Then I must have a better view of him," cried the Baronet, starting up.

The Marquis turned his head for the same purpose, observing a *Lavaterian* would swear he could read a vile character in his bloated aspect.

Sir Charles resumed his seat, complimenting the Marquis upon his penetration, and declaring he should, like him, be tempted to give the drunken sot credit for every vice that ever disgraced human nature.

"Pray what ailed the whole family the day they dined at your father's, Colonel?"

"I have in vain tried to guess," was the reply. "John is a very great favourite both of my father's and mine; it was to oblige him they were invited, and I am sure, nay indeed he has told me as much, he will never forgive himself for having put it in their power to expose both him and themselves in so strange a manner. The old fellow vainly fancies his new dignity has increased his consequence, when in fact it has only served to make his ignorance more conspicuous."

"And his fordid notions more glaring," rejoined the Marquis; "for I have been assured he is the most avaricious of mortals; therefore I dare say he would have preferred a thousand pounds to the honour of being dubbed Sir Archibald in consideration of his vast merits as a portrait painter. But come, let's be moving."

"With all my heart," said Douglas, "for I must be gone."

The Colonel said he had promised Lord Every to be at home early; the Marquis meant

meant to faunter about till twelve; the Baronet stood engaged to set the Colonel down.

“ Then, instead of going home, I wish you would go and sup with my uncle,” rejoined Douglas; “ he is not very well, will be very happy to see you, and your conversation will help to enliven him, as he is not fond of retiring early, because he can’t sleep.”

“ Agreed,” replied the Baronet; “ his Grace is the only elderly man I like to be *tête-à-tête* with; he remembers he was once young himself, and can be very droll when he chuses; I will do my endeavours to amuse him till you arrive, if he is in the humour to sit up.”

Douglas thanked him, and looking at his watch, declared he must stay no longer, and with Sir Charles and the Colonel left the Rotunda, the Marquis having joined another party.

They stopped in one of the outer rooms, while they sent one of the people such places abound with, to call their servants, who soon brought word they would be up in a few minutes, and were close together; they therefore waited with tolerable patience for five minutes or more, when Douglas began to fear he should be after his time; besides, it was one of his maxims to be speedily obeyed. So saying—

“ I will step out, and see if I can’t hurry my fellows; they seem unusually dilatory, because I am in haste.”

“ Ten to one the coachmen have got jammed in among the carriages, and can’t come forward,” said the Colonel.

“ Then let us endeavour to get to them,” rejoined Douglas; “ our presence may induce their brethren of the whip to assist, instead of impeding their progress;” leading the way, preceded by their messenger and his torch, who kept calling out for the carriages,

riages, with the voice of a Stentor, every three seconds.

As they drew near the crowd, a most clamorous noise assailed their ears ; and having stopped to listen for a few seconds, Douglas said—

“ I fancy we might have waited long enough ; for my servants are engaged in the dispute, whatever ’tis about.”

They advanced into the crowd, where they heard the servants apostrophized by the titles of “ Pick-bones—shabby rascals—impudent dogs—dirty scoundrels ! &c. &c.” They retorted pretty warmly with “ Such would-be gentry—hackney-coach quality !” and many more equally polite appellations.

“ I will try if I can’t put an end to this genteel war of words,” cried Douglas, pushing forward, and calling out the moment he came in sight of his servants, “ What the

devil do you stand quarrelling there for? Draw up if there is room, if not back the carriage out of the throng; do you suppose I am to wait here all night?"

Before he ceased speaking, he perceived his servants' noble antagonists were no less men than Archy Mackenzie and his companion, who, without deigning to look behind them at the person who addressed their adversaries, continued (though rage and inebriety rendered them scarcely intelligible) to abuse them in the most ungentlemanlike, illiberal manner.

Douglas's orders were issued in too peremptory a tone not to enforce obedience; his servants, therefore, eager to excuse themselves, alledged the impossibility of their getting up, owing to those gentlemen (alluding to Mackenzie and his friend) having sworn their hackney-coach should advance first.

“ And

“And what does it signify which advances first?” said Douglas; “that which was first called, has of course most right.”

The bye-standers unanimously declared the chariot had been first called, and was advancing when those gentlemen forced their coachman to drive out of the ranks directly before it, which was a d—d shame, as they might have done the horses a mischief, if nothing worse; but they were d—d impudent fellows, be they who they might, and had not behaved like gentlemen, though they boasted of being such; however, if they chose to get drunk, that was no rule why they should insult sober people doing their duty.

Douglas being quite surrounded, was forced to listen to the various complaints every one had to make against Mackenzie, and his still worse looking companion.

It

It required no very acute degree of penetration to discover what had biased the crowd so much in the servants' favour.— Douglas was very much dressed, a fine commanding figure; was master of a most elegant equipage, and three servants in very rich liveries. All these had its weight with the *swinish multitude*, the Baronet observed, and they, no doubt, expected his Honour would reward them for their zeal.

Douglas, to their infinite satisfaction, declared he was convinced the gentlemen, or whoever they were, must be very much to blame; therefore ordered his coachman to advance that moment, adding—

“ Let me see the hackney coachman or his fare try to prevent you at their peril ! ”

Mackenzie, whose rage had, if possible, increased during the suspension of abuse, owing to the little support his cause had met with from the populace, without turning towards

towards Douglas, whom he had as yet only heard without seeing, swore he would break every bone in his coachman's skin if he retreated a single inch ; fluttering and reeling and hiccoughing every word, and cursing the servants, their master, his d——d prancing horses, and gaudy carriage.

Regardless of his threats, thus supported, and conscious they had nothing to fear, one of the footmen ran to the back-horses' heads, and began to force them back, telling the coachman if he tipped him over, he must take the consequence of his obstinacy ; but the man, finding the voice of the people against him, was very willing, and endeavoured, as much as he was able, to break the way.

Archy, rendered furious by the coachman's prudence, and encouraged by his friend, placed himself in front of Douglas's horses, swearing his coachman should drive over him if he dared to advance a step. One
of

of the footmen, however, pushed him out of the way, while the other opened the door of the carriage.

Such an indignity was more than the brave Archy could put up with ; the servant had no sooner turned from him, than he hastened after him to the chariot door, which was being put to, and struck him with a cane he had in his hand, saying at the same time—

“ Take that, you insolent scoundrel, and tell your impudent master I will serve him the same if he dares to touch me. D—n such fashionmongers and all upstart puppies, say I !”

Douglas had not taken his seat in the carriage when his servant received the blow ; excessively provoked, and less disposed to take an insult from Archibald Mackenzie than from any man breathing, he hastily called out, “ Knock your flambeau about the fellow’s ears, Edward !”

The

The order was scarcely uttered before Mackenzie made a blow at the speaker as he was taking his seat, which, had it hit him, would have taken him in the face. Enraged beyond endurance, Douglas hastily put his head out at the side glass, caught a flambeau out of the servant's hand that was nearest to him, and performed the very office he had allotted his other footman, as Archy stood within his reach, and in so favourable a position, he was able to strike him on both sides of his head so severely, that his last blow levelled him to the ground.

To be attacked so unexpectedly and so unpleasantly, with such a glaring weapon, almost sobered the drunken Archy; his fall created a general shout of mirth, while Douglas, perfectly satisfied, returned his seat, and ordered his coachman to drive on.

At the moment the carriage got into motion, Archy, being raised by his friend, and smarting both under the pain and shame
of

of his punishment, roared out, "Satisfaction, d—me satisfaction, you impudent dog! I will make you remember striking the son of Sir Archibald Mackenzie with your d—d link, I will, you blackguard!"

Douglas pulled the check-string, and called out to the Baronet—

"Give that fellow my direction, Charles—I have not got a card about me; but if you are sufficiently in your senses to understand me, Mr. Mackenzie, if that is your name, why let me know when and where to meet you, and depend upon my punctuality!" ordering his coachman once more to proceed, which he instantly did, amidst a general shout of applause from the populace.

Sir Charles and the Colonel had been so diverted by the insolent Archy's chastisement, and the woeful countenance he now exhibited, that they were unable to speak
for

for a few seconds for laughing; till the discomfited hero's friend pushed through the crowd, and in his name enquired who the puppy was that had dared to treat Mr. Mackenzie in so unpardonable a manner.

“Take care you don't provoke me to follow Mr. Douglas's example, officious Sir,” replied the Baronet. “Your friend has paid the penalty of his insolence, and I am very much inclined to teach you to mention your superiors with rather more respect. I have already, by his desire, told you *my friend's* name, and *your's* will find him at Durham House, St. James's Square.”

Archy's Squire felt and looked very foolish; the Baronet's determined countenance convinced him any more ill language would not be borne with impunity; yet, wishing to appear the man of courage, he said—

“I had no intention to offend you, Sir; my regard for Mr. Mackenzie might induce
me

me to make use of an improper expression. However, the Hon. Mr. Douglas may depend upon hearing from him—please to tell him that, Sir.”

During this speech, Sir Charles and the Colonel got into the former's carriage, and drove off without even noticing, much less replying, to the speaker, and had a very hearty laugh as they drove to town. The Colonel was convinced Archy would be terrified out of his few remaining senses when he learned whom he had insulted, and as for demanding satisfaction of Mr. Douglas, he would as soon think of calling out his own father; and protested he enjoyed, in imagination, the reception he would meet with from Lady Mackenzie, should she be up when he returned home, covered as he was with wax from the flambeau, not to mention the dirt he had picked up in his fall; and should he acknowledge how he came to be in such a pickle, he questioned whether she ever forgave him; for to offend
a great

a great man, much more one to whom any of the family owed their promotion, was certainly acting diametrically opposite to both her principles and instructions.

They parted at Lord Everly's door, and Sir Charles proceeded to Durham House, determined not to mention the incident to the Duke, lest the bare possibility of even a coward's calling his nephew out, should make him uneasy. His Grace was alone, and going to supper. The Baronet told him to whom he owed his late visit, and where he had met Douglas.

"I am really very much obliged to you both," said the Duke; "few men enjoy the society of young people more than myself; and after supper you shall tell me who you saw at Ranelagh, and what news there is among the fashionable world."

Not chusing to mention Archy Mackenzie's adventure, as Douglas was concerned,
though

though he presumed it would be in all the newspapers next day, the Baronet merely made a few general remarks upon the company. A few glasses of wine had raised the Duke's spirits, and he was making comparisons between past and present times, when they heard a double knock at the door.

"That can't be George already," said his Grace, listening very attentively.

"I can't suppose it is," replied Sir Charles; "it was not a footman's knock in my opinion, nor did I hear a carriage stop."

"I was not attending at the moment, but he never allows his servants to knock long or loud after midnight; and who else can it be at this late hour?"

They remained in this state of uncertainty for a minute or more, and had concluded it was somebody had called by mistake, when the groom of the chambers entered with a letter in his hand, saying, as he presented it—

"A

“ A gentleman, who seems very much in liquor, has brought this note, your Grace, which is neither directed nor sealed; he asked the porter for his master, and refused to answer any questions, therefore Jonathan called me, but he did not chuse to tell me either his name or his business. He was come upon a matter of importance, which only concerned my master, was all he chose to say. Not knowing what to do, and convinced your Grace did not wish to see a person in such a situation, and at this time of night, I desired he would leave his business in writing, and call in the morning for an answer.—He said the business he came upon must be settled fasting; therefore if I did not chuse to let him see my master, he desired I would deliver that note, and inform you he should not leave the house till you either saw him or sent him an answer; so not knowing what to make of him, I have acted as he desired.”

“ Why,

“ Why, what can all this mean ?” cried the Duke ; “ the person, whoever he is, must have made a mistake !”

“ So I told him, your Grace, but he persists in it he is right ; that this is Durham House, and that my master is at home.”

“ Then read his note, Vane ; as it is not directed, I have at least a right, after what he has said, to suppose it is meant for me ; and I am sure it can't contain any thing that requires secrecy, or can it be of any consequence.

The servant opened the letter, and read aloud, as follows :

“ SIR,

“ The insulting treatment I met with from you two hours ago, leads me to demand and expect the satisfaction of a gentleman.

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As, therefore, no apologies, public or private, can be adequate to the offence you have given me, I shall be in Hyde Park with a case of pistols to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, where I shall expect to meet you, or you will abide by the consequence. My friend, who saw me knocked down, will deliver this, and accompany me into the field in the morning, where we shall find you, if you have any regard for your word, or your courage equals your insolence, which was not calculated to intimidate

“ ARCHIBALD MACKENZIE.”

The Duke listened with infinite composure to this effusion of Archy's courage and rhodomontade; and when the servant had ceased reading, said—

“ I knew the bearer of this curious epistle must have made a mistake; did you ever
VOL. II. N hear

hear a more absurd penned challenge, Sir Charles?" turning to the Baronet, who had with difficulty preserved his gravity; and thinking it would be absurd not to elucidate this strange business, briefly recapitulated the commencement and termination of the *fracas* which had given rise to this boasting missive.

The Duke laughed during his recital, saying—

"I should have done just the same at George's age; but what does the insolent scoundrel sign himself?"

"Mackenzie, your Grace," replied the servant.

"Why, can he be any relation of John Mackenzie's, Sir Charles."

"His only brother, your Grace, the second son and namesake of Sir Archibald Mackenzie, who was, as I told you, so much in liquor, he neither knew nor cared whom he insulted, and I am certain has
both

both wrote and sent this *daring challenge* unknown to either father or brother."

"Daring, indeed, as you observe, Sir Charles; I vow the more I reflect, the more I am amazed at his insolence, nay, abominable assurance! Send his messenger in, Vane; I will venture to become my nephew's representative upon this occasion; besides, the rascal might construe my refusing to see him into fear of his bluster!"

The man left the room, and the Duke declared he believed he could not punish Archy more than by letting the matter take its course, as he began to think his note had been purposely delivered in this strange manner, that he might interfere in the business, and prevent the meeting.

"But I shall hear what this other scoundrel has to say for himself," he continued; and had not ceased commenting, when Mackenzie's friend came reeling and staggering into the room, almost covered with dirt,

dirt, and much more in liquor than when Sir Charles last saw him, who presumed he had swallowed a few more glasses of spirits to enable him to face Douglas with proper courage, and to persuade him into a belief that both Archy and himself were anxious for the impending meeting. He stepped a few paces, looked round him, and not seeing the person he came to visit, appeared at a loss what to say.

The Duke, as if unacquainted with what passed at Ranelagh, said, in the imperative tone—

“What is your business with me, fellow? and who has sent me this unintelligible letter? Who do you come from? and how dare you presume to enter any gentleman’s house, disguised as you are in liquor, and in such a trim, it would be only treating you as you deserved, to order my servants to fling you out of the window. But be brief, and account, if you are able, for your letter and appearance!”

Wholly

Wholly unacquainted with the rank of the speaker, as from what Sir Charles had said, he had presumed Mr. Douglas (whose name, in the confused state of their brains had escaped both his and Archy's memory,) was the master of Durham House, he had made no farther enquiries; a watchman had directed, nay led him to the door, and he had asked, as he thought, for the person to whom he had brought the challenge. The Duke's address, therefore, both puzzled and astonished him; but he had drank too much brandy either to know or care what he did or said, so in an impudent tone enquired what had set the old fellow's back up so plaguily; adding—

“ I did not come to see you, old boy; my visit and the letter were meant for your friend, Sir,” turning to the Baronet, whose features he recollected, “ and you told me he lived here; but I suppose he is afraid to come forward, and speak for himself. But

N 3

d—mme!

d—mme ! he had best behave like a man now he is put to the test, else I will post him in every coffee-house in London, and cane him into the bargain wherever I meet him, or my name an't Merry !”

“ And if I let such barefaced impudence go unpunished,” exclaimed his Grace, “ I am not Duke of Durham—that is all, Mr. Merry ! Do you suppose I will allow such young men as you to force yourselves into my presence merely to insult me, and to venture to assert, before my face, you doubt the honour of a Douglas—my nephew ! the heir to one of the first Dukedoms in the three kingdoms, and a descendant from the Kings of Scotland ? Your friend I shall leave to his chastisement ; but you, rascal, I shall take upon myself to treat according to your deserts !” ringing the bell with violence as he concluded, forgetting the groom of the chambers was in the room, who immediately stepped forward, and asked what his Grace pleased to have.”

“ A

“ A horfewhip this moment ; and de-
fire all the men to attend me with their’s
immediately !”

The fervant instantly left the room, while
Merry, startled to find himſelf in the preſence
of the Duke of Durham, and much leſs cou-
rageous than when he firſt entered, ſtam-
mered out—

“ Your Grace had better take care what
you do ; I am as well acquainted with the
laws of my country as you can be ; I did
not know I was addreſſing the Duke of
Durham.”

“ Nor do you, notwithstanding your vaſt
knowledge of the law, ſeem to be aware of
the conſequence of insulting a Nobleman.
Did you ever hear of *ſcandalum magnatum*,
fellow ? However, as I aſſiſt in making thoſe
laws you are ſo converſant in, I will ven-
ture to chaſtiſe you at the riſk of any pe-
nalty I may incur !” ſnatching up Archy’s
note, and tearing it into ſcraps.

Merry wished himself away, and began seriously to repent his officiousness; but to make his retreat either unperceived or unmolested, he feared was impossible. As the spirit of the brandy began to evaporate, his courage began to flag; he fluttered and hesitated, while he muttered out that he found he had been purposely misled; however, Mr. Douglas would do well to send an answer to his friend.

“ You know, Sir,” turning to the Baronet, “ the provocation Mr. Mackenzie received, and that you were the occasion of the mistake that has occurred.”

Before Sir Charles could make any reply, his Grace having rung the bell again violently, half a dozen men-servants, armed as he had ordered, entered the room.

“ Come along,” cried his Grace, advancing to meet them, and seizing a whip from the foremost, with which he walked
towards

towards Merry, and looking him full in the face, said, "Go, scoundrel, and tell your impudent friend I flung his scrawl at your head, and then horsewhipped and kicked you out of my presence!" laying about him with his weapon while he spoke, and throwing the scraps in his face.

Having driven him without the door, he ordered his men to kick and whip him out of the house. They instantly entered upon their part of the duty with no small glee, and made the hall resound with their strokes, till the door being opened, the culprit hastened away, much soberer than when he entered, vowing revenge, and cursing Douglas, the Baronet, and the unfortunate Archibald.

The Duke having seen him make his exit, returned to Sir Charles, exulting in what he had done.

“ Let him have recourse to the law ; I should not mind being fined ten thousand pounds for the pleasure I have had ! I only wish to God Archy Mackenzie had accompanied him ! However, by your account he has already paid pretty dear for his insolence. George must act as he pleases—in his place I would cane the reptile the first time I met him. Do you think he will send a second challenge, Sir Charles ? ”

“ He has repented ere this, too seriously, that he ever dispatched the one your Grace has torn ; for, according to Douglas’s account, he is one of the most errant cowards that ever trod the earth.”

At that moment Douglas entered, exclaiming, having heard the Baronet’s last words—

“ Upon whom are you bestowing that spirited panegyric, Charles ? ”

“ Upon

“ Upon Arch bald Mackenzie, who has sent you a summons to attend him in Hyde Park,” was the reply.

“ Yes, and I think his messenger will remember bringing a challenge to Durham House as long as he lives,” cried the Duke; repeating what had passed during Merry’s visit, and expatiating, with no small degree of triumph, upon his hasty retreat.

Douglas laughed very heartily, and wished he had returned a few minutes sooner, as he should have gloried in meeting Merry upon the steps.

“ And here I hope you mean to let the matter rest, George,” said the Duke; “let them challenge me if they dare, and I will have them brought to the bar of the House of Peers.”

“ Depend upon it, my dear Sir, Archy Mackenzie is ready to swear by this time he never wrote the unfortunate letter Merry delivered; and had I been at home to receive

it, and acceded to his wishes, would have either come himself, or got some of his family to make any excuses best calculated to appease me, rather than have faced me in the field. I am convinced Merry's was a premeditated blunder, just to save Archy's honour, which would certainly have stood impeached if he had not called me out; and they imagined you would settle the affair without any bloodshed. They have both been deservedly punished. But to enter upon a more interesting subject;—the Count de St. Mars is to have a private audience of the *great man* to-morrow, and I hope he will have less reason to repent having been forced to quit his household gods, than many of his countrymen."

As it was now near three o'clock, the Duke, satisfied at all events his nephew was in no danger, wished the two friends a good night, adding, his late exertion, having rather fatigued him, might contribute to his repose, though he much doubted whether

it would have the same effect upon Mr. Merry.

“ He danced to a disagreeable tune, your Grace,” said Sir Charles.

“ If you do but sleep the better, Sir, for his *carmagnole*,” rejoined Douglas, “ it will have answered more than one good purpose.”

The Duke smiled; and after shaking hands with both, left the room. The moment they were alone, Douglas made the Baronet repeat all that had passed after his departure from Ranelagh, and during Merry’s visit.

“ Well, I did not think Archy had even had so much bluster about him. I have not done with him yet, for I will certainly give him and Merry the meeting; only I shall take the liberty of altering the hour of appointment, as I prefer six to eight. You must be my second, Charles, and I must trouble
you

you to inform Mackenzie of my intentions."

"Why, as I don't think his greatest enemy could devise a more severe punishment for him, I am at your orders, as I am convinced you will not have an opportunity of immortalizing your name in this duel. Therefore the sooner I am gone, the better, as I may, perhaps, catch the valiant gentleman relating his heroic facts, or rather tragical adventures, to the Knight and my Lady before he retires."

"Not he truly; to affront a great man (and such I am sure I now am in her eyes) is a crime of *lèse majesté* in Lady Mackenzie's opinion; disinheritorship would be one of the least evils the culprit would have to dread! Joking apart, I question whether she would think the most abject humiliation to the offended party a sufficient atonement for so indecorous a misdemeanor; therefore let me entreat you would be careful not to let her or the Knight suspect you errand, though I would have you knock the house down rather

rather than not make them hear ; and if he is not come home, wait his return, or enquire where is the most likely place to find him. If they should not mention Merry's, ask his direction, for ten to one he is there ; as I rather think they will suppose I shall not hear of the challenge, so hope to raise their fame at my expence, by parading Hyde Park for an hour, and then telling the story in all the coffee-houses in London, if they can but obtain a hearing."

" No unlikely conjecture ; but only write your note, and depend upon my finding Squire Archy, if he is above ground."

Douglas instantly wrote as follows :—

" SIR,

" Your friend, either accidentally or purposely, let the note you sent me this evening fall into the hands of the Duke of Durham. What passed between him and his Grace
can't

can't concern either of us, nor prevent me from meeting you according to your desire at six (in preference to eight o'clock) this morning, at the ring in Hyde Park, with my pistols. The bearer of this will be my second; to him therefore you will give your final answer.

“ G. D.”

Having read, sealed, and directed the note, he said—

“Now get you gone, Charles; I will walk to your house, where I shall wait your return, lest we should disturb the Duke.— Make any frivolous excuse to the Knight and my Lady likely to pass current, to prevent them from suspecting the real purport of your errand; and hint to Archibald I shall not like to be played upon. I think he has not left himself a loop-hole to creep out at; but I positively believe he will
fooner

fooner confess his rashness to the Knight, than meet me in the field : so be careful not to afford him an opportunity to tell his story, and let me see you again as soon as possible."

The Baronet promised to make all expedition; and set out for Leicester Fields, while Douglas pursued his way on foot into Piccadilly.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

WE will now take a few retrograde steps to account for Archy's appearance at Ranelagh, and for the excess of courage which induced him to challenge the heir to the House of Durham.

Since John had left Leicester Square, her Ladyship had not ceased to reproach the Knight with having driven him from home; and had rendered the house so uncomfortable, that even Sir Archibald, as well as his son, had often taken refuge at a tavern (for he had few acquaintance and fewer friends) to get out of her way. Archy, having formed
a fort

a sort of intimacy with the Mr. Merry already mentioned, who had chambers in Staple's Inn, was, fortunately as he thought, engaged to dine with him on that day. Repeated potations of strong punch, to which he was wholly unaccustomed, led him to fancy he possessed some small share of that manly virtue distinguished by the name of courage.

During breakfast he mentioned the circumstance to her Ladyship, who did not care how often he dined or supped from home, so long as it was not at coffee-houses or other public places, where he was of course spending money, and which he had often had it in his power to do of late, owing to a present he had received from his generous brother.

"If ye are invited to Merry's, as ye say, and to dine at free cost, why weel and gude, for ye ken the spurce of yere late extravagance is stopped; ye are an atrocious fule,

fule, boy, or ye would hang like a leech to yere brother, till he provided for ye, just to shake ye off; but mark my words, if ye run in debt, ye may rot in prison! Bless God, I am willing and able to give ye yere board and lodging, though 'tis ainly doing ye an injury, and encouraging ye in idleness; ye ought, sin ye are sae unwilling to be made independent, to turn oot; yere brother never cost us a farthing from the time he left college; but ye have nae the spirit of a louse—hoot upon ye! I can hardly credit ye are a Mackenzie! However, if ye stay oot as ye have done of late at Counsellor (or Clerk Merry's, I suppose, if ye gave him his reeght title), why ye shall find my doors shut when ye come hame."

Archy protested he had never staid out till one o'clock since their arrival in London, and had frequently been at the door within a few minutes after they had retired; and people could not keep any company, nor
of.

of course make any friends, if they did not conform to the present fashionable hours.

“Grant me patience!” cried her Ladyship, “to hear sitch lazy loons as ye talk of fashionable hours! Yere brother John might reason so; but ye, paltry varlet, wha was never in a great mon’s company but in my presence, to make the company ye keep an excuse for yere irregularities! When ye can convince me, like Johnny, ye have spent even the night in Mr. Douglas’s, or Colonel Frazer’s company, I shall nae complain tull see ye come hame at breakfast time next morning; so say nae mair, ainly take care to keep good hours tull ye can make a proper excuse for yere bad ones!”

Thus ended the conversation; but her Ladyship having seen him set out for his friend’s, dressed in the new suit he had had made to go to Lord Everly’s, declared her suspicions of his having told her a falsity, and protested she would sit up herself till
he

he did come home, that she might convince herself whether her strict injunctions were obeyed.

At eleven o'clock the family went to their usual supper (since John had left the Square) bread and cheese, and fourteen shilling beer; porter was her Ladyship's aversion, it was too heavy a liquor at night, and none but coal-heavers could require it at dinner. Having finished their frugal repast, which afforded her Ladyship an opportunity of entering into a dissertation upon the dearness of provisions, she sat with tolerable patience till midnight, which was much too late, in her opinion, considering the extraordinary fire and candle such late hours forced them to burn; but they must be like other people of rank. Being determined, however, to see Archy, that she might assure him, once for all, this was the last time he should ever gain admittance after twelve, she proposed a game at cards
to

to pass away the time; and owing to her remarkably good luck, she did not reflect upon the hour, till the watchman informed her it was past two o'clock. Both the Knight and her now (as they had often done before) made innumerable rash vows concerning their son, who, her Ladyship protested, would be the ruin of them, as she foresaw he would run over head and ears in debt, and they must either discharge them, or lose great part of their consequence, if not their character; but he must and should do something for himself.

Their two servants had been sent to bed; therefore they had no alternative but to sit till he did come, or to lock him out at once. At last they agreed to wait till three, after which hour he should seek a lodging elsewhere, let what would be the consequence. Her Ladyship attributed all his bad habits to idleness, and only wished John would so far exert his interest, as to get him a small appointment any where abroad! Once
out

out of England, he might sink or swim, live or starve, just as it happened; they should have done their duty, and no one could blame them! A handsome present, properly applied, she knew would do the business without troubling John; but then, if the worthless loon did not do his duty, the money would be all thrown away: besides, she did not yet despair of getting better acquainted with Mr. Douglas. Could not they contrive to get him to sit for his picture? Sir Archibald knew how to please him that way, and she would take care to put him in an excellent humour.

Little did her Ladyship think the son, for whom she was thus *maternally* anxious to provide, was at that very moment doing his utmost endeavours to render all her wise plans abortive.

After having been so roughly handled at Ranelagh, the associates had at last ascended their vehicle, in which they drove to
the

the — coffee-house in Cockspur Street, where they were engaged to sup with a party of their own stamp, to whom they related the tragical fracas which had occurred upon their departure from Ranelagh, imputing the whole blame, as may be supposed, to that insolent scoundrel who lived at Durham House, but whose name they had forgot.

Most of their *soi-disant* friends were perfectly sober; and, very anxious to make Merry and Archy carry the joke a little farther, they therefore ~~plied them~~ not merely with wine, but even brandy, till they perceived they were quite off their guard, and then pointed out the absolute necessity there was for their calling that impudent fellow to an account for his scandalous treatment. One of them penned the challenge already mentioned, which Merry was sent to deliver; and as soon as he was gone, fearful they might get concerned in the scrape they did not doubt he would be involved in, they made their exit, leaving

Archy, who was almost too drunk to notice their defection, to wait his return *solus*.— But the moment the glass ceased to circulate, and these kind souls ceased to extol his courage, the doughty hero began to feel certain qualms, very inimical to the appointment Merry was gone to make in his name. The rage the latter seemed to be in when he returned, quite alarmed, and nearly sobered him; the flogging bout had had the same effect upon Merry, which induced him to call for their reckoning, and sally forth into the street with the pusillanimous Archy, before he chose to communicate to him this fresh grievance.

Archy easily consoled himself for his friend's mortification, so long as he had not seen Douglas; but was not a little startled when he discovered his adversary was the friend from whom his family continued to hope they should derive so many advantages. He blamed Merry for his precipitancy, and even hinted he had met with no more than
he

he might expect, considering the Duke of Durham's rank.

The Counsellor retorted very warmly ; he would make both him and the Duke repent if he ventured to say he had been to blame in the affair, when all he had done was out of regard for his honour. As for his Grace, he should sue him for damages, and did not doubt making his fortune by the job ! However, if he, Archy, was inclined to remain his friend, he would accompany him home, and then into Hyde Park, properly armed, at the appointed time, when, if Douglas (as there was every reason to suppose he would not) did not join them, they should be at liberty to brand him for a coward in all public companies, and thus affix a stigma upon his name which his fighting half England would never totally remove.

Archy dared not object to this considerably generous proposal ; only said he must go home, but would be ready to attend

Merry at his own hour, if he would call for him in the morning. Upon this they separated, each truly repenting they had ever begun a dispute which neither expected would terminate much to their satisfaction ; for, notwithstanding his vain boast, as he recovered his senses Merry was but too conscious it would be mere folly to attempt obtaining redress of the Duke of Durham, as his behaviour to that Nobleman would indubitably reduce the damages a jury might be obliged to decree him, to a few shillings, beside creating him so many enemies, he should be forced to relinquish all hopes of rising in his profession ; to lower Douglas would not be attended with any of these serious consequences, and would equally gratify his revenge.

Just as the watchman was informing the neighbourhood it was three o'clock, Archy reached his father's door, at the very moment her Ladyship was preparing to bar and bolt him out. According to his established

blished custom, he endeavoured to make the footboy hear, and let him in, without disturbing the family, by rapping with his cane against the kitchen window—a signal agreed upon between him and the lad, who always received hush money upon such occasions.

Her Ladyship heard the noise, and instantly suspected it was by this means Archy gained admittance, unknown to them, at such unseasonable hours. She beckoned to the Knight and Margaret, who were sitting in the front parlour, to move as softly towards her, as it might be thieves breaking in, instead of their son; but after listening very attentively for a few minutes, they heard Archy calling Tom, very softly. Her Ladyship instantly resolved to part with the footboy, and hastily stepping forward, opened the door with infinite precaution, and caught Archy in the very act of attempting to force the area-gate. Not chusing to create a disturbance which might lower her in the opinion of her neighbours, she desired

he would walk in. With difficulty he complied with her request, and chancing to stumble over the mat that lay at the door, nearly fell at his length in the passage.

Her Ladyship, who was close behind him, hastily flung to the door, and seizing him by the arm, as he was making an attempt to ascend the stairs before her, turned him round, and, rendered speechless between anger and surprise at the figure he cut, dragged him towards the parlour door, that she might take a better survey by the light; and as he rather resisted her efforts, she fairly shoved him in before her with both hands, when, unfortunately, his foot caught in the carpet, and owing to the additional force he proceeded with, he fell head-foremost into the middle of the room.

“Would to God ye had broke yere neck!” exclaimed her Ladyship.

“It would have been no great matter,” cried the Knight.

“Drunken

“ Drunken creature !” ejaculated Margaret ; “ the Lord have mercy upon the poor soul who falls to your lot !”

By degrees Archy raised himself upon his hands and knees, and was pausing to take breath, and recollect where he was, when her Ladyship, whose rage now exceeded all bounds, gave him a kick that occasioned him to take a second roll, and make several unsuccessful efforts before he was able to recover his equilibrium ; during which time her Ladyship stood surveying him with the candle in one hand, while the other was lifted up in token of her astonishment. The smart suit she herself had both chose and bespoke, was totally covered with dirt ; he had also several spots in his face, arising from the drops of wax from the flambeau, which had raised the skin wherever it came in contact with his puffy cheeks. Her Ladyship screamed with excess of passion to find no expletives sufficiently expressive of the rage her son inspired her with. To question him

was of no avail, as his replies were totally unintelligible.

Having all three exhausted every reproach the English language afforded upon the subject of drunkenness, her Ladyship commanded him to precede her up stairs, vowing this should be the last time he should ever sleep under her roof. Archy had sense enough to know silence was his best defence for the moment; therefore, by the help of the banisters, he made shift to crawl up to his own apartment, which he was obliged to enter without a light, as, her Ladyship truly remarked, he was not in a condition to be entrusted with a candle! Good people's lives were always in danger where such worthless loons resided! She closed the door after him, telling him he might thank God she had let him in at all.

The whole family slept up two pair of stairs; the Knight, my Lady, and Margaret, forward,—Archy in the only room backward.

backward. Little passed after he was housed, as her Ladyship observed it was of no use to sit up lamenting their misfortunes; some decisive step should be speedily taken to rid her house of so intolerable a nuisance, and to prevent the sot from launching out into extravagances they should ultimately be forced to pay for.

Wishing Margaret a good night, they betook themselves to their respective couches, and soon forgot their recent troubles in a sound sleep, from which they were almost immediately roused by a violent knock at the front door. All three laid in trembling anxiety for half a minute, hoping they had been mistaken, and that it was at the next door, when a more violent peal than the former made them all jump out of bed (though in different apartments) with one accord, dreading the house was on fire through Archy's having gone down stairs to get a light, which it was possible, when he thought they were asleep.

Margaret slipped on a few clothes, and was running into her father and mother's room, when the house absolutely shook with the third knock, and, contrary to her first intentions, she ran back to her own window. The Knight, actuated by the same impulse, threw up his sash, calling out, "Who is there?" The sight of a very fashionable carriage, and to appearance a very fashionable young man standing upon the steps, removed their first fears.

In answer to the Knight's enquiry, the stranger, who was no other than Sir Charles Creighton, replied, he wished to see Mr. Mackenzie.

The Knight was undecided what to do, till my Lady, having also taken a survey of the speaker, desired him by all means to go down; it was no doubt some friend of John's, who did not know he had changed his abode, and he appeared of too much consequence

quence to be refused admittance at any hour.

Without making any further enquiries, the Knight hastened down stairs, and her Ladyship, attended by her dear Margaret, who stood upon the listen, hurried after him ; but stopped at the dining-room door, not chusing to appear in sight, yet particularly anxious to know what had brought this gentleman, whom the Knight admitted as speedily as letting down the chain, undrawing the bolts, and unlocking the door would permit ; and as soon as he was within the passage, asked his name, and what could bring him at such an unseasonable hour.

“ My name is Creighton, Sir Archibald Mackenzie,” said the ever (and seldom less so than at this moment) *unceremonious* Baronet ; “ my business is with your son ; you will therefore excuse my explaining it to you. Is he at home ?”

“ You mean my eldest son, I presume, Sir ?” said the half-piqued Knight ; “ he no longer resides here.”

“ It is your youngest I wish to see, Sir— Mr. Archibald Mackenzie, concerning an appointment he made last night with a friend of mine. If he is at home, I must see him ; if not, can you inform me where is the most likely place to meet with him ?”

The Knight hardly knew what to make either of this strange visiter, or his strange request. Appearances proclaimed him a man of fortune and fashion, therefore prudence made him resolve to comply with his request, hinting, in hopes of bringing on an explanation, his son had retired rather in liquor.

“ But you saw him, I presume, in the course of the evening, Sir ?” said the Knight.

“ I had that advantage, Sir Archibald ; but, sober or not, I must request you would permit me to see him now. Allow me to
step

step into his room; I merely wish to ask him a question no one but himself can resolve”

“ Then please to follow me, Sir,” said the Knight, determined to listen at the door, that he might get at the bottom of this mystery.

Upon hearing them advance, Lady Mackenzie and Margaret ran up before them into their respective apartments, while the Knight, as he slowly preceded Sir Charles, enquired—

“ Could not you leave your business in writing, Sir ?”

“ Impossible, Sir Archibald, as it requires an immediate answer.”

By this time they reached Archy's door, which the Knight opened, and putting his candle into the Baronet's hand, said—

“ You will find him there, Sir,” walking forward into his own room.

Sir Charles shut the door after him, and advanced toward the bed, where the valiant Archy lay fully exposed to view, the curtains having been taken down to be washed, as her Ladyship would have told any one who had asked her the question, though the fact was they were luxuries he never enjoyed. On one side lay great part of his over-night's implements of valour—on the other the best suit. Not at all relishing the various odours that assailed his olfactory nerves, Sir Charles hastened to execute his commission by calling Mr. Mackenzie several times, but with no effect; he therefore shook him as well as he was able, standing at the foot of the bed, not chusing to venture on either side, till Archy grumbled out, "Well, I am coming; what, is it time already?"

"Not quite," replied the Baronet, giving him another shake to bring him to his recollection, which made him look wildly round, then growl out, "Who is there? what do you want?"

"To

“ To have a few minutes’ conversation with you, Sir. Don’t you recollect seeing me at Ranelagh last night, or must I assist your memory, by informing you I am the person who gave your friend Merry Mr. Douglas’s address.”

“ Oh! what Sir Charles Creighton! Well, and what do you want with me?”

“ Simply to give you an answer to the note you sent to Durham House by Mr. Merry.”

As the Baronet spoke very low, not to be overheard, and Archy chose to make himself more stupid than he really was, he was obliged to repeat his words several times, and enter into a long explanation respecting the delivery of the letter at Durham House before Archy chose to comprehend him. At last he ventured to raise himself, and to put out his hand for the letter Sir Charles had for some time held extended.

Not

Not having been able to find his night-cap in the dark, he had endeavoured to substitute his pocket handkerchief in its stead, which now, in consequence, shaded his woeful countenance ; but raising it, the better to peruse his letter, he ventured to look round him, glanced his eyes over the direction of the note, and after wiping his face with his shirt sleeve, tore it open ; but as he seemed hardly to understand it, Sir Charles presented him with the light, and he began to read it once more, but trembled to such a degree, the Baronet expected every moment to see his shirt on fire, and called out twice to caution him. At length he seemed to have made himself sensible of the contents, and looking at Sir Charles, said—

“ I am sure I can’t recollect any thing that passed last night. I believe I was very much in liquor at Ranelagh.”

“ There I perfectly agree with you, Mr. Mackenzie ; but I only wait your answer to Mr. Douglas’s note, and am empowered to
inform

inform you, if you have any affairs of particular consequence to settle previous to meeting him, he is perfectly willing to comply with your hour of appointment, though he should prefer six to eight, as the sooner and more privately disputes of honour are settled, the better."

"My friend told me, Sir Charles," replied the ghastly Archy, pausing, and looking once more over the note, "that he was horfewhipped, by order of the Duke of Durham, I suppose, and that Mr. Douglas was not at home."

"However, you now find the latter gentleman is ready and willing to give satisfaction, therefore only tell me whether he is to expect you at six or eight."

Archy's pallid countenance lengthened considerably; he let the fatal paper fall, and, half breathless, enquired—

"What is the clock, Sir Charles?"

"Near

“Near four,” replied the Baronet; “so in two hours Mr. Douglas and myself shall expect to see you and Mr. Merry at the ring in Hyde Park!”

Had Death been staring Archy in the face, he could not have been more terrified; the bed really shook under him, and he broke into a profuse perspiration, while with hesitation he articulated—

“Very well, Sir Charles; I will get up, and go to Mr. Merry’s; but I am not provided with pistols—he told me I should not have occasion for any. Where can I buy a pair so early, and get powder and ball? I can’t meet Mr. Douglas before eight. I—”

At this moment the door flew open, and in bounced the Knight and his Lady, the former in his dressing-gown and flannel night cap, her Ladyship with a dress cap over her night one, and wrapped in a long flannel bed-gown, their looks expressive of the utmost

utmost terror and dismay. Her Ladyship began—

“ Wha was that I heard ! Has the good-for-nothing varlet offended the Honourable Mr. Douglas ? Wha was all that aboot pistols, powder, and ball ? Ye, Sir, are a Creighton, I understand from what the sorry loon said—a most respectable fameely ; yere father, Sir Andrew Creighton, was one of the most auncient, as well as worthy Barons in aw North Britain, and nae doubt he has transmittit his virtues to his posterity ; and as for Mr. Douglas, his noble origin is his least merit ! ”

Sir Charles, impatient to be gone, said, “ I am sorry you should have been either alarmed or disturbed, Lady Mackenzie ; but I must refer you to your son for an explanation of the phrases you seem to have overheard. Allow me to wish both you and Sir Archibald good morning ; ” and giving the trembling Archy a look he perfectly understood,

stood, endeavoured to make his retreat, when her Ladyship darted forwards, exclaiming—

“ Hold, hold, my dear Sir Charles ! in the name of Heaven stop one moment, and tell me what my son has been guilty of ! He has certainly offended yere noble friend—let me entreat ye would satisfy a half-distracted mother.”

The Knight seconded her entreaties, protesting he dreaded the result of his own enquiries. The Baronet, at a loss what answer to make, assured them it was a mere trifling affair, which would indubitably be made up without their or any one’s interference, and ought solely to be attributed to Mr. Mackenzie’s having made rather too free with the bottle.”

“ Oh ye drunken villain !” cried her Ladyship, running towards the bed with uplifted hands, when unfortunately her foot slipped, and she with difficulty saved herself from falling by catching hold of the post.

Already

Already almost frantic with terror and rage, this accident rendered her nearly raving; she screamed so loud, both Sir Charles and her husband thought she was going into fits, till they discovered the cause. She then vented her fury upon the unfortunate Archy, deploring very pathetically her misfortune in being related to such a worthless, sottish, good-for-nothing villain !

The culprit, between illness, fright, and his mother's scolding, was too much agitated to understand a word that had passed. Douglas's note, which had fallen from his hand, lay without side the bed ; it attracted her Ladyship's notice in the midst of her reproaches ; she therefore instantly seized it, and began to read the contents.

“ That is hardly fair, Lady Mackenzie,” cried Sir Charles ; “ that note is addressed to your son, and was not intended for your perusal.”

“ Aye,

“ Aye, my gude Sir ; but what concerns this sorry loon, bad as he is, must also concern his fameely, and I see plain enough he is going to bring me and mine into trouble. Oh the villain ! I shall certainly go wild ! My dear, ’tis the abominable drunken varlet has sent a challenge to the noble Mr. Douglas ; dinnae ye see he’s doing aw in his power to bring misery upon us aw ! Oh that I had nae lived to see this day ! Pray, dear gude Sir Charles, if ye have ony regard for a mother’s prayer, tell me how aw this came about !” actually squeezing out a few tears to soften the Baronet, who, still more at a loss how to act, again referred her to her son, and once more in vain endeavoured to make his retreat ; when her Ladyship, presuming, what was literally the case, he was in haste to leave the apartment, said—

“ I beg ten thousand pardons, Sir Charles, for having detained ye one moment in this swine’s kennel ; do pray walk down into the drawing-room only for five minutes—a refusal

refusal would really break my heart, distressed as I already am!" beginning to sob aloud, and holding the Baronet fast, who suffered himself to be thus led into the drawing-room, where, in spite of his efforts to prevent her, she threw herself at his feet, and again requested he would inform her what had passed between Mr. Douglas and the atrocious varlet she was obliged to acknowledge for a son.

Thus pressed, and finding it would be of no avail endeavouring any longer to keep them in ignorance, as they would indubitably extort a confession of the whole transaction from Archy the moment he was gone, he briefly recapitulated what had given rise to the challenge, and his unseasonable visit, adding, Mr. Douglas was no doubt in Piccadilly, impatiently waiting his return.

The Knight and his Lady both declared themselves shocked beyond the power of words to express their concern, and declared the

the audacious Archy should make any excuses either the Duke of Durham or Mr. Douglas would deign to receive. His assurance, which they could only attribute to his inebriety, was unparalleled; had he insulted an equal, he might have settled his own quarrel, but to dare to demand satisfaction of the noble Duke of Durham's heir, because he had treated him as his insolence justly deserved, would almost justify them in declaring him insane, and confining him for life; and if he were ever again seen in company with his impudent colleague, Merry, they would turn him out of doors penniless, as there was no knowing what disgrace the whole family might be involved in, if he continued to associate with such an ungracious varlet.

They then, understanding Douglas was waiting Sir Charles's return, entreated the Baronet would permit Sir Archibald to accompany him home, that he might convince that young gentleman how much he

was

was shocked by his son's behaviour. Sir Charles, anticipating some diversion from the scene, readily consented to the proposal, and the Knight hastened to dress, leaving her Ladyship to entertain their guest, who had been often tempted to smile at her ludicrous appearance.

She exerted all her eloquence during their *tête-à-tête* to induce him to second the Knight's attempt to deprecate Mr. Douglas's anger; repeatedly hinting she was very much afraid both the Duke and himself would repent having patronized her dearest Johnny, though certainly he could not be blamed for his brother's folly: still it was peculiarly distressing.

Sir Charles was by no means sorry when the Knight relieved him from the continued lamentations to which good manners forced him to seem to attend. She accompanied them to the street-door, obliquely hinting

to Sir Archibald what he ought to say ; and having seen them drive away, hastened to her beloved Margaret, to communicate her present, past, and future terrors to this favourite child.

END OF VOL. II.



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